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ANGOLA

a. **UN initiates contact with UNITA:** United Nations Under-Secretary for Africa, Ibrahim Gambari, held talks in the US recently with a senior UNITA official in an attempt to get the warring parties back to the negotiating table, it was reported, Jan 4.

Gambari returned to New York after a week of intense talks in Angola in December 2001, with government, UNITA and civil society representatives. He subsequently told the Security Council during a briefing that a "window of opportunity" existed to end the almost 30-year-old war between UNITA and the government.

He said the two had agreed to resume peace talks, on condition that certain aspects of the tattered 1994 Lusaka Peace Protocol could be renegotiated. The parties also wanted the church to play a facilitating role in the discussions, and had not objected to all sectors of civil society participating.

A diplomatic source said that Gambari's meeting with former UNITA representative to Washington, Jardo Muekalia, indicated "the urgency" with which all parties were approaching the resumption of peace talks.

In May, Rev Daniel Ntoni-Nzinga, executive secretary of the Inter-Ecclesial Committee for Peace in Angola (COIEPA) - which has been spearheading peace efforts - said the aim was to secure a ceasefire and to have UNITA, the government and civil society around the negotiating table by the end of 2001.

"Things are moving very quickly," the source said. No official statement was released after the Washington meeting. Gambari had told the Security Council during his briefing that the situation was fragile and that the UN would have to play its role with great caution.

[Background Info. Angola, page 577:a]

b. **UNICEF appeals for US \$18 million:** UNICEF, the UN Children's Fund, has appealed for US \$18 million to fund its projects in war-racked Angola, much of which it hopes to spend on reducing the country's appalling child mortality rate, it was reported, Jan 11.

"The condition of children in Angola remains catastrophic. The under-five mortality rate is the second highest in the world, with one child dying every three minutes, or 420 children dying every day," UNICEF said in its latest donor update published, January 9.

Saying the fund required US \$7.1 million to implement child mortality reduction programmes, the update added: "The project seeks to provide a minimum health package to vulnerable

populations, especially displaced children and mothers ... Among objectives are to immunise all new internally displaced children against measles, reinforce routine immunisations with the vaccination of 1.5 million children against main preventable diseases, and protect 100,000 families from malaria."

According to UNICEF, malaria remains the first cause of death among children, being responsible for 80 per cent of the demand of health service users, 50 per cent of child deaths among under-fives, 40 per cent of prenatal deaths and the main cause of absenteeism from school and work.

(SOURCE: *Times of Zambia*, Lusaka)

BOTSWANA

a. **Reduced diamond sales hit economic prospects:** The Botswana government's prudent management of the diamond-dependent economy will be challenged by the global economic slowdown, a growing HIV/AIDS burden, and the regional impact of the Zimbabwe crisis, the Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU) said in its latest forecast.

The London-based research unit said the government's comprehensive anti-HIV/AIDS policy will place a growing burden on government expenditure. But central to Botswana's fortunes is the diamond industry, which performed poorly in 2001.

The rate of real GDP growth is expected to fall from 4.3 per cent in the 2001/02 to 4.1 per cent in 2002/03, before picking up to 5.4 per cent in 2003/04 as exports benefit from the global economic recovery.

"Quotas on purchases of rough diamonds imposed in mid-2001 by De Beers' Diamond Trading Company will limit exports of diamonds in 2002 to 88 per cent of capacity.

However, production levels will be unchanged, and unsold stones will be stockpiled, so there will be no impact on GDP growth," the EIU said. The expected recovery in the global economy should lead to a relaxation of the quotas toward the end of 2003—4.

Closer home, Zimbabwe's economic and political crisis is expected to dominate regional politics.

"President [Festus] Mogae will be keen to use his influence within the Southern African Development Community to resolve the issue, and may follow the lead of the South African President, Thabo Mbeki, and become more openly critical if no progress is made in the near future," said the research unit.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Botswana, page 589:a]

BURUNDI

a. Danger signals from Burundi: Hopes that Burundi's new government will bring a speedy end to the country's brutal civil war are on the verge of being extinguished after Hutu rebels kidnapped two groups of school students within five days, it was reported, Jan 3.

In the first attack at the beginning of the week, dozens of schoolboys from a primary school in Burundi's eastern province of Ruyigi were abducted. In the latest incident, a group of boys aged between 16 and 21 years old were kidnapped from high school in the northern Kanyanza province. The UN Children's Fund, UNICEF, said it feared the rebels were conducting a campaign to force children to fight for them.

The mass abduction of boys and young men from schools is a new, brutal twist in an eight-year conflict, which has left an estimated 250,000 dead and caused widespread suffering among ordinary people. The kidnappings, along with an upsurge of rebel violence in the east of the country, have left Burundi's new government looking vulnerable only days after its inauguration, Nov 1, 2001.

The mood then was one of cautious optimism. Hutu politicians had returned from exile to take part in Burundi's political experiment.

b. Opposition leader elected as Speaker of new Parliament: Burundi's transition parliament, Jan 10, elected Jean Minani, leader of the main opposition party FRODEBU (pro-Hutu), as its Speaker.

Minani won 115 votes, with 53 against and one abstention.

The abstention came from one of Minani's challengers, Augustin Nzobiwami, who led an internal, dissident wing of FRODEBU during the years that Minani was in exile. Minani only returned from exile in Tanzania when the transition was launched, Nov 1, 2001, in line with the Arusha peace accord.

The transition parliament was installed on January 5, in line with the August 2000 Arusha accord between 19 Burundian parties. FRODEBU has 65 seats, while the former single party UPRONA (pro-Tutsi) has 16. This corresponds with the seats they won in democratic elections in 1993, before the assassination of the country's first Hutu president and Burundi's descent into civil war. Smaller political parties that signed the Arusha accord each hold three or four seats in the new transition parliament.

(SOURCE: *New Vision*, Kampala)

[Background Info. Burundi, page 567:a]

CAPE VERDE ISLANDS

a. Protecting babies against hepatitis-B: The health authorities in Cape Verde have now included Hepatitis-B among diseases for which babies are vaccinated.

The hepatitis vaccinations, started on January 1, target infants under the age of one year, UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) reported, Jan 1.

The introduction of the hepatitis vaccine is being funded by a grant of US \$207,000 provided to Cape Verde through UNICEF by the Italian government, a UNICEF source said, Jan 10. The grant covers the period 2001-2004, the source said. Under the programme, children received the first of three doses within seven days of their birth. Follow-up vaccinations are administered one month and six months later.

The Hepatitis-B virus is spread when blood or other body fluid from an infected person enters the body of another person. An infected mother can transmit the virus to her baby during birth.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

a. Four killed in cross-border attacks: Four people were killed in two separate incidents after armed men launched cross-border attacks from the Central African Republic (CAR) into southern Chad, news organisations reported, Jan 3.

Chad's interior minister, Abderahmane Moussa, said on Radio France Internationale (RFI) that the attack was led by Abdoulaye Miskine, formerly an aide to Laokien Barde, the assassinated leader of the Armed Forces for a Federal Republic (FARF). The FARF, a rebel group based in southern Chad, signed a peace agreement with the Chadian government in 1997, and the two sides renewed the accord a year later.

Miskine's group reportedly attacked a nomads' camp near the Grande Sido border post on December 29, 2001, killing two herders and kidnapping several others. Two days later the group ambushed a vehicle in the same area, killing two passengers and taking four others prisoner. The kidnapped Chadians are reportedly in jail in the town of Kobo in northern CAR and have been tortured, it was reported.

Moussa, reacting to reports from eyewitnesses that troops from CAR took part in the attacks, said he was sure that Miskine, who has been living in CAR for a few years, did not act alone. "We do not think that he could have acted on his own. Therefore we are urging the CAR authorities to put an end to these provocative acts," Moussa said.

b. UN agency transfers refugees: The UN refugee agency has begun to transfer refugees from the Central African Republic (CAR) to a new location within the Democratic Republic of the Congo, it was reported, Jan 9.

A total of 306 refugees were transferred on January 8 from Zongo on the Congolese-CAR border to a new location 45 km due south, in Mole. Further transfers will take place until the camp reaches its maximum initial capacity of 5,000, a spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Paul Stromberg, said, Jan 9.

Wells have been dug, classrooms for children completed as well as health and distribution centres, he said. At the end of December 2001, UNHCR had transferred kitchen utensils, jerry

cans, blankets, soap and plastic sheeting to the site and the newly-arrived refugees have received materials with which to build individual shelters, he said.

Following an attempted coup in May 2001, an estimated 24,000 refugees from CAR crossed the border into the DRC, settling in schools and temporary shelters in Zongo and other villages along the Ubangui River. An estimated 5,000 of these have since returned home, partly due to insecurity in the region, Stromberg said.

Despite an official visit from 20 CAR officials in December to encourage the refugees to repatriate, many have remained reluctant. Spokesmen for the refugees have said the government must rebuild their homes, put looters of the failed coup on trial, pay salary arrears for the civil servants among the group, and guarantee their safety should they return.

[Background Info. Central African Republic, page 614:b]

c. Annan criticises Bangui's human rights record: UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan has criticised the Central African Republic's (CAR) human rights record in a new report, it was reported, Jan 8.

Annan stated that serious violations of the right to life had occurred by uniformed elements, among others. Instances of extrajudicial executions, arbitrary detentions, untimely house searches, illegal arrests and "precarious conditions" in detention centres had been brought to the attention of the UN Peace-Building Support office, BONUCA.

He said the human rights section of BONUCA had received numerous complaints regarding the requirement that Central Africans wishing to travel by air must receive an exit permit. The permits, issued by the Joint Commission of Judicial Inquiry, certify that people were not involved in the failed coup of May 2001.

In the area of political dialogue, the national reconciliation dialogue due to commence following the failed coup had not yet taken place, partly because of judicial investigations into the putsch, Annan said. He described the political situation as "precarious" since May, and said it had deteriorated further in October 2001, following the removal of the country's top military official, General Francois Bozize, from his duties as chief of staff.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

CHAD

a. Government, rebels sign peace deal: The Chadian government signed a peace agreement, Jan 7, with the rebel Movement for Democracy and Justice in Chad (MDJT), following three days of negotiations in the Libyan capital, Tripoli.

The agreement provides for an immediate ceasefire, a general amnesty for prisoners held by both sides, and the involvement of the MDJT in the government and other state institutions, Libyan state television reported. The two sides also agreed to set up a tripartite follow-up committee responsible for the implementation of the peace deal, which was brokered by Libya. The committee will comprise representatives of the MDJT and the governments of Chad and Libya.

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al-Turiki, news reports said.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

CONGO

a. EC donates US \$66,000 for reintegration of ex-combatants: The European Commission announced that it has donated about US \$66,000 for the reintegration of ex-combatants and the collection of weapons in the Republic of Congo, it was reported, Jan 14.

The funds would be used to reintegrate 8,000 ex-combatants and collect 12,500 firearms by the end of 2002, in the second phase of the programme, the Commission reported, Jan 11. The areas to be concentrated on would be the regions of Pool, Niari, Lekoumou and Bouenza as well as northern regions.

The Commission warned ex-combatants that the programme was neither compensation nor entitlement. Rather, it added, it was a mechanism to protect civil society and for the consolidation of peace. The programme simply ensured the economic reintegration of unemployed ex-combatants, especially those still in possession of firearms, which they should voluntarily surrender for destruction, the Commission added. In April 2001, a public ceremony was held in the country's capital, Brazzaville, to burn guns collected during the first phase of the same programme. The ceremony was dubbed "the flame of peace" to symbolise the Congolese desire for peace.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

CONGO (DR)

a. EU to release DRC aid: The European Union has committed itself to releasing US \$108 million in developmental aid to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, an EU humanitarian source said, Jan 7.

Following the decision taken in December 2001 to resume developmental aid to the Congo, the EU would release the funds from the European Developmental Fund at the end of January, the EU source added. The money was, however, dependent on the continuation of the peace process, he said.

Unlike emergency funds available from the European Commission's Humanitarian aid Office, ECHO, which have been available throughout the current Congo crisis, developmental aid had been frozen during the early 1990s.

EU Commissioner for External Affairs Chris Patten and EU Aid Commissioner Poul Nielson opposed the resumption in development aid "pending clearer signs of a reopening of political dialogue" from the Kinshasa government, *The Guardian*, a London newspaper, reported, Jan 9.

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Meanwhile, the British foreign secretary, Jack Straw, and his French counterpart, Hubert Vedrine, have announced a visit to Uganda, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo later in January to discuss the situation in the strife-torn country.

b. UN soldier accused of rape; inquiry under way: The United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo, known as MONUC, has opened an investigation into a UN peacekeeper accused of trying to rape a 10 year-old girl in the eastern city of Goma, it was reported, Jan 11.

The incident allegedly occurred on December 26, 2001, and involved a soldier of the 232-strong Moroccan contingent stationed in the city. The girl was examined at the Goma General Hospital after her family accused the soldier. Results showed that there was a "probable rape attempt", according to MONUC, and investigations were launched by MONUC and the Rwandan-backed Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie (RCD-Goma) armed opposition movement that controls the region.

"MONUC deplores all acts of violence, and particularly any such ignoble act against minors," the UN said on December 27, 2001. "The results of the inquiry should determine who was responsible. There is no question that, should a MONUC staff member be involved, appropriate punitive measures will be taken."

Media sources reported that the RCD-Goma has asked MONUC to remove the soldier from Goma. However, a MONUC spokesperson said, Jan 10, that no formal request had yet been received.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

DJIBOUTI

a. President slams region over failure to bring peace to Somalia: Djibouti President Ismael Omar Guelleh has condemned the "inability" of regional countries to adopt a common approach in order to bring peace to Somalia, it was reported, Jan 14.

In a strongly-worded address to the summit of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), held in the Sudanese capital Khartoum, he said responsibility for achieving peace in Somalia lay first and foremost with countries of the region. He also lambasted the international community for its "wait-and-see tactics", according to a text of his speech carried by the Djibouti news agency (ADI).

"Somalis are tired of trying to understand the reasons behind the wait-and-see tactics and passivity of the international community," he said. "This attitude is for us, in many respects, incomprehensible...The pretext given to justify this inactivity is the inability of IGAD member countries to adopt a common approach."

"But, if the international community has failed to live up to its responsibility, are we not supposed to react with the urgency that situation requires of us by formulating - unequivocally and unambiguously - a common position so as to prove to the world that we are politically determined?", he asked.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

EGYPT

a. A museum of treasures planned: Egypt has opened an international competition for architects to design a museum near the Pyramids of Giza to house a vast collection of pharaonic treasures.

The English-language *Egyptian Mail* carried a full page invitation, Jan 12, for competitors to register to design the \$350 million museum on Cairo's outskirts, sponsored by the United Nations cultural organisation UNESCO.

The museum will take up a 50-hectare site and display about 150,000 pieces from Cairo and other museums, projects coordinator Yasser Mansour said. Tourism is one of Egypt's main sources of revenue. It has declined since the September attacks on the United States.

(SOURCE: *Asian Age*, New Delhi)

ERITREA

a. Disagreement over venue delays military coordination meeting: A meeting of the Military Coordination Commission (MCC), due to be held on January 10, has been delayed because Eritrea and Ethiopia disagreed over the venue.

Ethiopia indicated its refusal to meet at the Mereb River bridge on the border between the two countries where the previous meeting was held. Eritrea, for its part, want to meet again at the Mereb River and rejected proposals to hold future meetings in Asmara, Addis Ababa or the Kenyan capital Nairobi.

The MCC, which is chaired by the commander of the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), meets periodically to discuss and evaluate the military situation in the Temporary Security Zone (TSZ) separating the two armies, and adjacent areas. Analysts note it is also a forum whereby the military of both sides can talk to each other.

UNMEE spokesman Jean Victor Nkolo said, Jan 8, the issue was a minor one and he was confident that a common ground would be found. He hoped that the 11th meeting of the MCC would go ahead later in January. "This is a technical delay," he said. "The peace process is on track. It is not the MCC that is in question, simply the venue of the meeting."

(SOURCE: *Monitor*, Kampala)

ETHIOPIA

a. China pledges technical assistance: The Chinese government has pledged US \$20 million to Ethiopia to help develop its technical abilities and build closer ties between the two countries, it was reported, Jan 14.

At the end of a three-day visit to Ethiopia, Chinese Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan said the two countries had also agreed to expand their trade and investment. In a keynote speech, he called for African nations to play a bigger role in international affairs, including increasing their say and representation in the UN Security Council. Tang also urged the World Trade Organisation (WTO) to launch a fresh round of talks aimed at helping third world countries fight poverty.

The Chinese foreign minister, who flew out of Ethiopia, Jan 12, said his trip had been extremely fruitful and that he believed both countries would improve their already close ties. He said that they had much to learn from each other and that Ethiopia played vital role in African affairs.

"At present, Ethiopia is focusing on domestic economic development, while China is deepening reform and opening up and quickening the pace of development," he added. Tang also praised the establishment of the African Union (AU) that would help the continent fight poverty and increase development.

b. Top bank officials charged with corruption: The government's anti-corruption commission has filed charges against 54 current and former officials of the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia (CBE), as well as a number of businessmen, *The Reporter* newspaper said, Jan 9.

The charges, imposed by the Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission, accuse the CBE officials of "conspiring with the accused business people to secure them unlawful loans amounting to over one million birr [US \$118,105]".

Among the accused CBE officials are its president Tilahun Abay, executive vice-president Habteselasie Hagos, and former vice-presidents Naser Hasen, Alazar Desie and Hailu Legese. Some of the accused are already facing other charges of corruption, *The Reporter* said.

In August, 2001, it was reported that the State Bank of India would take over management of the CBE. At the time, Tilahun Abay said the CBE - which is publicly owned and Ethiopia's biggest bank - needed to modernise to cope with possible future competition from foreign financial institutions.

c. Heroin trafficker sentenced to three years imprisonment: The Federal High Court has sentenced a heroin trafficker to three years imprisonment.

The individual, by the name Akochuko Silvestry, hid 637.40 gm of heroin in his stomach while on board from Bombay to Congo, Kinshasa, it was reported, Jan 4.

The report filed by the government media did not mention the nationality of the trafficker but said the court also ordered that Okochuko should pay 10,000 birr in penalty and if failed to do so, the prison term would be extended to four and half years.

Okochuko swallowed the 637.40 gm heroin in 40 pieces and took the Ethiopian Airlines on transit to Congo, Kinshasa on November 8, 2001.

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

GABON

a. Ebola death toll now 24: The death toll from Ebola haemorrhagic fever in Gabon and the Republic of Congo was 24 as on Jan 6, the World Health Organisation (WHO) reported.

It said 17 of the deaths were in Gabon, where the Ebola outbreak was first reported in December 2001.

WHO added that 33 confirmed cases had been reported, 20 in Gabon and 13 in Congolese villages close to the border

between the two countries. An additional 15 cases were being investigated. All persons having had direct or suspected contact with the blood or other body fluids of Ebola cases were being observed for 21 days, WHO reported. It added that 247 such persons were under "active follow-up" in both countries.

An international team of medical specialists continued to work closely with health ministry officials on both sides of the border, WHO reported. "The Gabonese Red Cross Society is carrying out health education activities in the Gabonese villages," it said. Ebola, named after a river in the Democratic Republic of Congo where it was first discovered in 1976, is transmitted by direct contact with the body fluids of infected persons. There is no cure for it and between 50 percent and 90 per cent of victims die.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

GAMBIA

a. Government calls for immediate withdrawal of EU envoy: The Gambian government has expelled George Marc Andre, the Charge d'Affaires of the Office of the European Commission, saying his stay in the country jeopardises the smooth relations between the EU and The Gambia, it was reported, Jan 14.

A note verbale from the embassy of The Gambia to the EU in Brussels dated December 26, 2001, calls for the immediate replacement of Marc Andre barely four months before the end of his tour of duty, which began in 1998. The government says although it regrets having to make such a request to the EU, it holds that Andre's replacement is in the best interest of Gambia-EU cooperation. The note verbale indicates that the reasons for prematurely ending Marc Andre's tour of duty are manifold.

"Not only does Marc Andre at times dwell too long on micro-issues, which suggests a hidden agenda of his own, he also displays an attitude that borders on contempt for governmental authority" the note verbale claims. "The government therefore believes that his continued presence as head of the Commission's office here risks poisoning the excellent relations that so happily exist between Gambia and the European Union".

The Gambian government also claims that working with Marc Andre who was threatened with expulsion three times previously, would be inimical to the Gambia's Country Support Strategy that was drawn within the framework of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement "as it may slow down the high rate of programme implementation to which The Gambia has been accustomed".

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

GUINEA BISSAU

a. UN Security Council urges dialogue: The UN Security Council has added its voice to calls for national reconciliation in Guinea Bissau.

In a statement issued, Jan 8, the Council said it "encouraged President Kumba Yala of Guinea Bissau in his pursuit of the policy of national reconciliation and dialogue taking into account the established constitutional norms".

It said, Security Council members also encouraged regional and international leaders "to continue playing an active role and redouble their initiatives of good offices for economic and financial assistance". They also "expressed continued support to the team of UNOGBIS (UN Peace-Building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau) for their tireless efforts to help keep the peace-building process in Guinea-Bissau on course, despite multiple challenges.

The statement came in response to the Secretary-General Kofi Annan's latest report on Guinea Bissau in which he said the political situation in the West African country had "remained difficult and volatile" during September -December 2001. The report was dated December 14, 11 days after the government announced that it had foiled an aborted coup.

Annan had appealed to local political actors "to continue to resolve their differences through dialogue and within the framework of the constitution". He had also called on the international community to "remain engaged with and supportive of Guinea-Bissau" and to contribute generously to a roundtable conference to be held in early 2002 to help raise resources for the country.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

KENYA

a. Four killed in Tana attack: An administration policeman was among four people killed, Jan 13, by a band of 100 raiders who attacked a village near Hola Town in Tana River district.

The raiders, armed with modern assault rifles, who struck at Bondeni Village, shortly after 2 am, torched 37 houses and stole 400 cattle. The attack comes barely a week after President Moi visited Garsen on a peace mission during which he ordered police commissioner Philomen Abong'o to rearm homeguards and police reservists whose guns had been taken away by the provincial administration.

The President had also told local elected leaders to impress upon their people the importance of peace. This was after the leaders had admitted that they had not done enough to stop the clashes which have so far claimed more than 100 lives.

He had also ordered the arrest of anyone found inciting the people to violence and had expressed disgust at the failure by leaders to end the skirmishes.

[Background Info. Kenya, page 617:a]

b. Uneducated still follow cruel female circumcision: An increasingly intense debate is raging in Kenya about female circumcision, it was reported, Jan 11.

"I have to take my children to be circumcised because this is what I got from my grandparents," 32-year-old Chepochekor Komolion said while her baby girl played in the distance.

"This is the culture we have, this is the way we found it".

Komolion's attitude is entrenched among most women and young girls living in rural Kenya where many people still highly value female circumcision despite efforts by the government, churches and civic groups to stamp out the practice.

President Daniel arap Moi outlawed the circumcision of girls under the age of 17 in December, 2001, introducing prison terms and penalties of up to 50,000 shillings (\$640), a huge amount of money for most Kenyans who earn less than a dollar a day.

Opponents of circumcision say it is painful, outdated and carries health risks, but criminalising the practice will not deter uneducated people like Komolion, nor their leaders in remote areas like the Kacheliba constituency in western Kenya.

"I don't like the view people have taken to approaching the problem by condemnation, by demonising people who practice it and making it look like they are primitive", said Samuel Poghisio, an assistant minister from Kacheliba.

Like most Kenyan tribes who practice female circumcision, the cattle-tending Pokot community living in Kacheliba view it as a rite of passage from girlhood to womanhood. More importantly, they believe it controls a woman's appetite for sex, putting a lid on promiscuity.

The nomadic Pokot men insist on marrying only circumcised women because they are more likely to find them "untouched" when they return from months of wandering in search of scarce water and grazing land for their cattle in the arid landscape.

"We prefer the girls we marry to be circumcised because it reduces adultery," said 31-year-old Lomunyongole Anokile, switching his spear from one hand to the other as he peered over the thick bushes to survey his herd of cattle. Girls too accept the argument, believing it would be difficult to find a husband if they are not circumcised.

Even worse is the fear of dealing with the community, which stigmatises uncircumcised women and labels them cowards. Such girls would rather commit suicide than stay uncircumcised.

"We as girls have no alternative but to carry on with it because there is no other way of showing courage and passage into adulthood," said 16-year-old Nkiru Dawan.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi and *Asian Age*, New Delhi)

LIBERIA

a. Rights body expresses concern over detention without trial: Center for the Protection of Human Rights has expressed concern over the prolonged detention of 125 prisoners at the Monrovia Central Prison without trial, it was reported, Jan 9.

According to a release issued, Jan 8, the Center observed that some of the prisoners have been charged with various crimes from theft of property, criminal mischief, threats of terrorism, criminal coercion, among others, and have been in detention from one to four years without indictment and trial in violation of Article 21(F) of the Liberian Constitution, which prevents preventive detention.

"The prolonged detention of the prisoners for the prosecution's failure to proceed with the prosecution of the prisoners violates the prisoners' constitutional rights," the release asserted.

The Center therefore gave the ministry of justice a six-work-day ultimatum to release the prisoners from further detention or the Center will institute the proper legal proceedings against the Republic of Liberia for their release from further detention.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

LIBYA

a. US extends curbs: US President George W Bush wrote to Congress saying that he was extending economic sanctions slapped on Libya some 25 years ago to January 7, 2003.

"The crisis between the United States and Libya that led to the declaration on January 7, 1986, of a national emergency has not been solved," Bush said in a letter to Congressional leaders.

The United Nations suspended its own sanction against Libya in 1999, after Tripoli gave up two suspects in the 1988 bombing of Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland. But Libya has not met its obligations under UN Security Council resolutions, including accepting responsibility for the actions of its officials in the attack and paying compensation, Bush charged in the letter.

"For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to Libya and maintain in force the comprehensive sanctions against Libya to respond to this threat," he said.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, Madras)

[Background Info. Libya, page 618:a]

MALAGASY

a. Government gets help to storm victims: The government of Malagasy has not yet declared a state of emergency, but has moved swiftly to alleviate suffering in the wake of tropical storm Cyprien, which hit the south-western region on January 2.

In its latest situation report released, Jan 8, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) said the government had already distributed one mt of rice, tents and other goods to residents in the Onondaga, Morombe and Toliara districts, which were most severely affected.

According to the report, an inter-agency reconnaissance flight over the affected areas was conducted on January 5, confirming initial estimations of damage. It said about 900 people, especially from the coastal areas, were affected in Morombe, and that about 1,000 people were affected in Onondaga. In addition, two people were reported missing in Morombe, it added. The estimated damage caused by Cyprien was estimated to be about US \$181,000.

UNDP resident representative in Malagasy Adama Guindo said, Jan 9, that flooding had begun to subside. However, he said: "the information I have indicates we will have a very active cyclone season. We don't know if the storms or cyclones will reach land or fade away, but the season is definitely predicted to be very active this year."

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MALAWI

a. Regional conflicts dominate SADC leaders' summit: Zimbabwe's crumbling democracy overshadowed a meeting of Southern African leaders in Malawi, Jan 14.

Instability in Zimbabwe could convulse all of southern Africa and the meeting of the 14-member Southern African Development Community could be the last opportunity for regional leaders to rein in Mugabe ahead of presidential elections.

Malawi's President Bakili Muluzi who was hosting the summit, said he hoped presidential elections scheduled for March 9 and 10 would be held freely.

"We are very hopeful that the elections will be peaceful, free, fair and transparent," Muluzi said. "As a matter of fact; what is important in an election is not just the election day but the entire election process, from the preparations to the vote counting and the announcement of results."

b. Flooding leaves thousands homeless: Thousands of Malawians fled to churches and schools after incessant rains and flooding washed away homes and demolished crops in the southern and central districts, says a report, Jan 7.

About 10,000 villagers have been left homeless in the central district of Ntcheu after the rains washed away their grass huts over the holiday season. Minister without portfolio Uladi Mussa said the situation was desperate.

"Crop fields have been washed away and farmers will need to replant if the district is to avert hunger next year," Mussa said. About 28 Malawians have died of cholera and more than 1,000 cases were reported in the aftermath of the rains.

c. Sacked politician says he was fighting for freedom: One of the two Malawian deputy ministers who was sacked in a cabinet reshuffle by President Bakili Muluzi said, Jan 10, that he was simply fighting for his country's freedom from starvation and suffering.

The reshuffle, Jan 9, saw the deputy minister of agriculture Dr Mekki Mtewa and deputy minister of transport Iqbal Omar dropped from the cabinet. Mtewa and Omar once served as deputies to the powerful former foreign affairs minister Brown Mpinganjira who fell from grace by opposing Muluzi's intention to stand for third term as President early in 2001.

Mpinganjira was fired and has subsequently formed the opposition pressure group the National Democratic Alliance.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MAURITANIA

a. Government bans opposition party: The Mauritanian Human Rights Association, Jan 3, condemned the banning by Mauritania's government of the opposition Action pour le changement (AC-Action for Change) which champions the rights of ex-slaves and other black Mauritians.

The Association called on the government to review the measure, which it described as "anti-democratic", and urged civil society and the international community to intervene.

The ban, decided at a cabinet meeting, resulted from a report by interior minister Cheyakh Ould Ely, which said the party's activities were harmful to national unity and incited intolerance, state-owned Radio Mauritanie reported, Jan 2.

AC leader Messaoud Ould Belkheir denied the accusations. BBC reported him as saying that the ban was "a typical example of the absence of democracy under a dictatorial regime that does not tolerate opinions opposed to its own". AC is the third party to have been banned by the Mauritanian government in two years.

AC's actions, BBC reported Ould Belkheir as saying, were in response to slavery which, according to human rights groups, still exists in Mauritania although it has been officially banned.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Mauritania, page 594:a]

SIEERA LEONE

a. UN completes disarming of rebels: Eleven top rebel commanders have handed their guns to UN peacekeepers in Sierra Leone as a symbolic last step in disarmament to end one of Africa's most brutal wars.

Since May 2001, the biggest United Nations peacekeeping force in the field has disarmed more than 45,000 fighters from various factions to allow elections in the world's poorest country after more than a decade of bloodshed.

That ceremonial closure of the last disarmament camp took place in the diamond-rich eastern district of Kailahun, Jan 11, near to where Revolutionary United Front rebels fired their first shots in March 1991.

Since then, the war has left up to 50,000 dead.

"All camps in the country under the control of UANSML have been closed and we should all congratulate ourselves as peacekeepers for a job well done," said UN mission field commander and Kenyan General Daniel Opende.

Turning to the rebel commanders, he said, "Your task now as civilians is to sustain the peace you have now given your people, especially the children who have to go to school". Other rebels will be allowed to take part in Presidential and Parliamentary elections set for the middle of 2002.

(SOURCE: *Asian Age*, New Delhi)

[Background Info. Sierra Leone, page 584:a]

SOMALIA

a. US electronic eye to track Al-Qaeda camps: The US military stepped up aerial surveillance along the coast of Somalia to keep an electronic eye on training camps where Osama Bin Laden and his top aides could take refuge.

But they cautioned that while Somalia was considered among the top centres for extremist activities, the reconnaissance by US Navy P-3 surveillance planes did not mean the country was

the next US target after Afghanistan. The United States has bombed Afghanistan since October 7, and succeeded in toppling the ruling Taliban for harbouring Bin Laden. The Saudi-born militant and his Al Qaeda network are accused of involvement in the September 11 attacks on New York and Washington that killed more than 3,000 people.

Army Gen Tommy Franks sought to steer reporters away from the notion that the US war on terrorism would proceed in a sequential manner, picking one country after another.

Gen Franks, regional commander in charge of military operations in Afghanistan, said the manner in which particular "terrorist assets" would be dealt with would depend on the willingness of the country harbouring them to deal with the problem itself. The US has vowed to wipe out the Al Qaeda network, which is believed to operate in about 60 countries.

Increased surveillance along the coast of Somalia was among the steps being taken to watch for any regrouping of Al Qaeda forces who have fled Afghanistan. The stronghold of the Al-Itihad Al-Islamiya movement, which the United States says has ties to Al Qaeda, is Ras Kaambooni on the southern coast of Somalia—one of the areas under US surveillance, a US official said.

The United States considers Somalia a hub of extremist activity, with the Al-Itihad Al-Islamiya movement focused on installing a government that has a strict interpretation of Islamic law. The group has more than 2,000 "hard core" members with several thousand additional followers, a US official said.

The movement has received weapons and funding from a number of extremist groups including Bin Laden and Al Qaeda and has sent followers to train in Afghanistan, the official said.

The group is in frequent battles with the Ethiopian military and rival factions in Somalia and is blamed for the 1998 kidnapping of six Red Cross employees in Ethiopia and the 1996 bombing of a hotel in Addis Ababa that killed four civilians and injured about two dozen people.

US officials said it was likely that some members of Al Qaeda fled Afghanistan for Somalia, but "not top-rung people". The US military has been checking ships and boats in the northern Arabian Sea to make sure Al Qaeda forces are not escaping by that route and Pakistani forces along the border with Afghanistan were blocking escape through mountain passes.

But Gen Franks acknowledged that some were bound to slip out.

(SOURCE: *Asian Age*, New Delhi)

[Background Info. Somalia, page 622:b]

SOUTH AFRICA

a. Home affairs department arrests two Pakistanis: The two Pakistani nationals arrested by Bloemfontein home affairs immigration officials, Jan 10, will remain in custody at the Thaba Nchu police station in the northwest, pending their bail application.

Mehboob Alam and Mohammed Ismael are believed to be involved in a syndicate that falsified temporary residence permits, passports and other document.

Their arrest follows a report from a South African woman that she had entered into a so-called 'marriage of convenience' with one of the two. 'With the involvement of the National Intelligence Agency (NIA) and the SAPS falsified documents were confiscated during an investigation at their homes,' the department said.

Home Affairs spokesperson Leslie Mashokwe said these were the first arrests for falsified documents in the New Year.

b. Ambassador to UN hijacked in Soweto: South Africa's ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, was hijacked in Rocklands, Soweto, Jan 9, Johannesburg police said.

Investigating officer Superintendent Steven Mamphaga said, Jan 10, George Nene was attacked in the driveway of his Rocklands home and robbed of a hired Mercedes Benz, registration MYT543GP.

Nene was not harmed but was shaken by the incident.

Mamphaga said a case of armed robbery had been opened and the vehicle was still missing. Nene played an instrumental role behind-the-scenes during the run-up to the World Conference Against Racism held in Durban in September 2001.

c. Put sanctions on Harare, says Tutu: South African Nobel peace laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu said, Jan 12, sanctions against Zimbabwe might be the only way to make President Robert Mugabe "see sense".

Archbishop Tutu told BBC Radio's *Today* programme by telephone from South Africa that President Mugabe was "power mad" but the threat of sanctions might convince him to curb his actions.

Zimbabwe's parliament passed laws, Jan 10, aimed at tightening his grip on power ahead of a Presidential election in March. "If the (Mugabe) can't be made to see sense...there may be a carrot that you could dangle in front of him to say that if he does certain things then obviously sanctions will not be applied," Archbishop Tutu said.

"But if he remains intransigent, as seems to be the case, then we have to say very, very reluctantly that people are going to have to take some very specific and effective action".

d. Mbeki aide arrested for fraud, perjury: President Thabo Mbeki's political advisor, Titus Mafolo, appeared in court, Jan 4, on charges of fraud and perjury related to his alleged hijacking in December 2001, Pretoria police said.

He was freed on R3000 bail, and was to appear in the Pretoria Magistrate's Court again on February 13, police spokesman Inspector Percy Morokane said.

He declined to elaborate on the charges, saying only they related to the statement Mafolo made after allegedly being hijacked, which the police had since found to be "full of inconsistencies".

"After investigating, we found that something was amiss," Morokane said. Mafolo was arrested in Pretoria on Friday morning (Jan 4). He claimed he was hijacked on December 15, and that R2000 was stolen from him.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg and *Asian Age*, New Delhi)

SUDAN

a. Summit condemns terrorism: A two-day summit of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) ended in the Sudanese capital, Khartoum, Jan 11, condemning global terrorism in all its forms.

A final communique issued at the end of the summit by the IGAD heads of state also denounced the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States and the 1998 bombings of the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania.

A separate resolution on Somalia urged member states to support reconciliation efforts in the war-torn country and called on the transitional government in Somalia to renew its rejection of terrorism and rid the country of suspected terrorist elements.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, Madras)

[Background Info. Sudan, page 623:a]

SWAZILAND

a. Swazis blame SA police for damage in drug raid: Swaziland police have blamed their SA colleagues for damage to property during a joint raid on the residence of Swazi millionaire Ron Smith, whom they say was suspected of drug trafficking, it was reported, Jan 4.

In papers filed in response to Smith's lawsuit for damage, the Swazi police claimed that SA policemen damaged burglar proofing and a safe in the raid.

A Pretoria judge fined Smith R3000 two months ago for corruption after he was found guilty of bribing a prosecutor to drop drug- trafficking charges brought against him by the SA police. Smith was arrested in 1999 in a joint raid by Swazi and SA police. He claimed that the police stole property, including jewellery and R200,000 in cash, from the safe during the raid. The Swazi police said that property was damaged in the raid, but that was necessary.

They had found it hard to enter Smith's house as there was no one present and they relied mainly on the technical expertise of the SA police who could open a safe with no problem.

Smith and his family were not at home when the raid began. On their return they found police searching the house.

b. Princess challenges age-old custom: A Swazi princess has thrown the age-old custom of virgins wearing don't touch me' tassels into confusion after she announced that it was okay for maidens to wear trousers, a report said, Jan 11.

King Mswati III's first born daughter Princess Sikhanyiso Dlamini, 14, made the comment in a bid to encourage more young women to take part in the traditional Umchwasho rite.

Umchwasho maidens have to wear the woollen tassels to show that they have sworn not to have sex or even shake hands with a man for the next five years. Any man caught breaching the rule is forced to pay a fine of one cow and R1, 300. While maidens found guilty of having sex have to pay a fine of R1, 300.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

TANZANIA

a. US suspends jewelry sale: Zale, the largest US-based retail jewelry chain, has announced it will no longer sell jewelry containing the rare, blue-violet stone known as Tanzanite because of its possible links to Osama Bin Laden's Al-Qaeda network, it was reported, Jan 14.

Tanzanite is found only in northern Tanzania.

Effective January 1, 2002, the company, based in Irving, Texas, pulled Tanzanite jewelry from its stores, following its own investigation into reports that proceeds from the sales of the gemstone were possibly used to finance Al-Qaeda sponsored terrorism. Officials said, however, that they merely had a suspicion that terrorist activities are financed from Tanzanite proceeds.

"We have not been able to prove or disprove there is a link," said Susan Lanigan, Zale's senior vice president and general counsel. Nevertheless, Lanigan, who personally handled the Zale investigation, said she believed the corporation could not "comfortably" protect the Zale brand's integrity given the company's strong suspicions.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

TOGO

a. Higher court upholds opposition leader's appeal: An appeal judge in Lome on Jan 4, overturned a decision by a lower court that had sentenced Togolese opposition leader Yaovi Agboyibo to six months in prison.

Agboyibo had been sued for libel by Prime Minister Agbeyome Kodjo. The appeal court disallowed the conviction because Kodjo had not paid the sum of 20,000 CFA francs which, by law, a plaintiff is required to pay on filing a suit. Although Agboyibo's lawyers had invoked the same argument at the initial trial, the lower court had ruled against him on August 3, 2001.

Kodjo had sued Agboyibo for alleging that, before becoming prime minister, he had formed a militia which beat and killed opposition supporters in Yoto, the region from which both men originate. Although acquitted, Agboyibo was not released immediately since, according to his defence team, a second case was pending against him.

b. Amnesty concerned about reports of abuses: Amnesty International has expressed concern about "consistent reports of restrictions to freedom of expression and assembly, violence against members of political parties, inhuman and cruel prison conditions, and widespread impunity" in Togo.

It said that, in the run-up to legislative elections on March 10 and 22, political parties should publicly commit themselves to safeguarding the human rights of all Togolese, as guaranteed by international human rights law and the Constitution.

"Human rights are central to Togo's future political, economic and social development," the organization said in a statement issued, Jan 10, at the launch of a 'Human Rights Manifesto for Togo'.

"Togo will elect a new legislature in March. This election will not simply determine who governs the country but will provide the people of Togo with the opportunity to tell their political leaders what kind of society they want to live in," Amnesty said.

"The conduct of the elections will also have an important impact on Togo's international reputation, including on foreign aid which was suspended in 1993, after elections were marred by irregularities and human rights abuses."

According to Amnesty, hundreds of civilians and military personnel in Togo have been victims of extrajudicial executions over the past decade and the government is yet to investigate massacres perpetrated in 1991, 1993, 1994 and 1998. Torture and ill-treatment, Amnesty added, continue for those in custody, and conditions in many prisons are life-threatening.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

UGANDA

a. Obote warns UPC over rally: The Uganda People's Congress (UPC) president, Dr. Apollo Milton Obote, Jan 7, instructed party officials to take precaution to avoid "bloodshed" in a rally set for Jan 12.

The function, slated to take place at the Constitutional Square, is to discuss global terrorism and dictatorship.

A source at Uganda House, UPC headquarters, said the Lusaka-based Obote instructed the party's Presidential Policy Commission chairman, Dr. James Rwanyarare, on phone to ensure that the lives of members of the public who will attend the rally are protected.

"The rally is a foundation for Uganda's freedom and should be attended by every patriotic Ugandan," Obote is reported to have said.

"If there is any sacrifice of blood to be made, I would rather that you, Rwanyarare, sacrificed your own life rather than risk the lives of innocent citizens," Obote added.

(SOURCE: *New Vision*, Kampala)

ZAMBIA

a. Levy Mwanawasa sworn in President: The Zambian ruling party candidate, Levy Mwanawasa, was sworn in as the country's President, Jan 2.

"I, Levy Patrick Mwanawasa, having been elected President of the Republic of Zambia, do swear that I will faithfully and diligently discharge my duties....in this high office," he said in accepting the oath of office.

Earlier, a Zambian judge cleared the way for the swearing-in, rejecting an opposition bid to force a ballot recount in the closely fought presidential election.

Zambia's 10 opposition parties have accused the ruling Movement for Multiparty Democracy of rigging the polls in favour of Mwanawasa. The MMD and the Electoral Commission have denied the allegations.

Speaking on behalf of the opposition, Christon Tembo, a former army commander who heads the Forum for Democracy and Development, said the opposition would pursue recourse both on the streets and through the courts.

Election not free & fair: Zambia's elections were not free and fair, a local monitoring group claimed, Jan 3, saying the results it recorded differed from the returns issued by the electoral commission.

The allegation by the Foundation for Democratic Process came a day after ruling party candidate Levy Mwanawasa took power as President and followed street demonstrations and opposition allegations that his party rigged the election.

Alfred Chanda, who heads the foundation, said the organisation would only release its tally of election results in an upcoming report. He said that after hearing from election observers who recorded with returns as they were reported by individual heads of polling stations.

Mwanawasa talks tough: Levy Mwanawasa, Jan 3, began work on a new government, with an uncompromising attitude towards opponents planning nationwide street protests over the vote that brought him to power.

"I intend to make the law the principal guide of the state, not men. Everyone must follow the law and no one will be allowed to circumvent or break it with impunity", he said.

Mwanawasa warned opposition leaders to call off mass demonstrations or face the full force of the law. He said street protests against his election bordered on treason.

Ten opposition parties have accused the ruling Movement for Multiparty Democracy of rigging the December 27 polls and took to the streets, Jan 2. Opposition leaders have given no specific timetable for their protests. Opposition leaders criticised Mwanawasa for threatening to clamp down on them, saying if he believed in the rule of law then he understood they had a right to protest at what they saw as his fraudulent election.

Hundreds of civil servants to be retrenched: Hundreds of public service workers are likely to be laid off following the decision to reduce the cabinet by President Levy Mwanawasa, it was reported, Jan 11.

Secretary to the Cabinet Leslie Mbula, Jan 10, said under the public service reform programme, interviews will be conducted and "only those found suitable with requisite qualifications will be assigned other duties".

"For the rest of the workers, you know what will happen to them," said Mbula who declined to categorically state that they will be declared redundant.

Announcing his cabinet, President Mwanawasa said he had scrapped off the ministry without portfolio and merged the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources and the ministry of tourism.

But Mbula explained that despite the merging of the two ministries, each one of them will continue performing its functions as before and will retain the key personnel to run the operations. "Civil servants will continue. The fact that we merge the ministries does not mean the functions are removed.

[Background info. Zambia, page 623:a]

b. Hippos kill 2 in Gwembe: Two people have died after being attacked by hippos on the shores of Lake Kariba in Gwembe district, it was reported, Jan 14.

Confirming the deaths, Gwembe district administrator Peter Miyoba said the bodies have not yet been retrieved. He said a team of Zambia Wildlife Authority (ZAWA) officers have been dispatched to conduct the search for the bodies. Miyoba said the hippo population in the area had increased and people were living in fear.

(SOURCE: *Times of Zambia*, Lusaka, *Hindu*, Madras, *Asian Age*, New Delhi and *Statesman*, Calcutta)

ZIMBABWE

a. New laws against criticising Mugabe: Zimbabwe faced censure from the European Union, Jan 11, after its ruling party approved new laws criminalising criticism of President Robert Mugabe.

The European Union will tell Zimbabwe it faces economic sanctions if it fails to curb alleged human rights abuses, but diplomats doubt the warning will have much impact.

President Mugabe is sending a high-level team for talk with EU including information minister Jonathan Moyo, architect of a Bill critics say will stifle opposition ahead of the March 9-10 poll.

By contrast, the EU will be represented not by ministers but by the Spanish ambassador—Madrid holds the bloc's rotating presidency—and a mid-ranking European Commission official.

Members of the European Parliament have accused the EU of moving too slowly and cautiously against President Mugabe, but diplomats say they were following legal procedures and warn that hasty moves could harm the poorest people in Zimbabwe.

"Expectations should not be too high...is the opening of a process of consultations, which according to the Cotonou Agreement could last a maximum of 60 days," said Michael Curtis, spokesman for the EU's executive commission.

President Mugabe, 77, has sparked Zimbabwe's biggest crisis since independence from Britain in 1980 with seizures of white-owned farms and attempts to tighten control of the media and opposition in the face of a collapsing economy.

Morgan Tsvangirai, leader of the opposition Movement for Democratic Change who is expected to pose the biggest challenge to the President's 22 years in power, appealed to the EU to be firm with the delegation.

Britain said, Jan 10, legislation passed in Harare showed the government's "contempt for basic democratic principles".

"It is increasingly clear that the people of Zimbabwe may be denied a free choice in the 9th March Presidential election", the foreign office minister for Africa, Baroness Amos, said in a statement.

Mugabe allows independent poll observers: Zimbabwe, Jan 11, accepted demands for independent observers at the elections in March. He also agreed to a political "code of conduct" respecting civil liberties. Stantely Mudenge, the foreign minister, who headed a team of five ministers at the last-ditch talks in Brussels, agreed to the concessions in a bid to head off punitive sanctions against President Robert Mugabe's regime.

But his promises were met with scepticism. EU diplomats were concerned that Zimbabwe could be playing for time, since Mugabe did not make it clear whether he would let election observers into the country for the six weeks before the vote.

"We're going to need firmer commitments and we're going to need it in writing", said an official.

EU officials, ending their soft approach, demanded a halt to human rights abuses, the lifting of press curbs, safeguards for the judiciary, free and fair elections and an end to arbitrary land seizures. Mudenge claimed his government was the victim of a smear campaign by the British press and Zimbabwe's former masters in London. "Britain has used its membership of the EU to gain sympathy for white farmers in Zimbabwe and to try to evade its colonial responsibilities," he said.

He argued that new measures curbing the press and political freedoms pushed through Parliament in Harare have been "misunderstood", and said Zimbabwe needed time to sort out a land-reform crisis inherited from the colonial era.

The mounting pressure on Mugabe came as Australia and New Zealand called for Zimbabwe's suspension from the Commonwealth.

"We don't want a country sitting around the table with us, or a president sitting around the table with us, who doesn't stand for the things we stand for," said Alexander Downer, the Australian foreign minister.

EU foreign ministers will decide later whether Zimbabwe has done enough to avoid "smart sanctions" involving a travel ban on Mugabe and his close circle, and a freeze on their overseas assets. The EU's development projects in Zimbabwe, worth \$79 million over five years, could also come under review, though food and medical aid will not be touched.

Geoffrey Van Orden, MEP, the Tory foreign affairs spokesman in Brussels said: "They're just trying put off the evil day for longer. We have to move ahead with the preparatory steps for smart sanctions anyway, so that Mugabe sees we really mean business."

Security chiefs will not accept Mugabe defeat: Zimbabwe security chiefs said that they would refuse to recognise a victory for anyone other than President Mugabe in the elections to be held, March 9-10.

Appalled opposition leaders described the statement as a "preemptive military coup". Security chiefs said: "We will therefore not accept, let alone support or salute, anyone who has a different agenda that threatens the very existence of our sovereignty, our country and our people".

The commanders, spearheaded by the defence force chief General Vitalis Zvinvashe, the army commander Constantine Chiwenga, the air force's Air Marshal Perrence Shiri, the police commissioner Augustine Chihuri, heads of the prison service and the feared Central Intelligence Organisation, also threw their weight behind draconian legislation before Parliament. Generals Zvinvashe and Chiwenga have been caught in controversy over Zimbabwean diamond concessions and logging activity during President Mugabe's three-year military adventure in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Air Marshal Shiri, until his transfer to the air force, faces questions over the brigade's involvement in the killings of up to 20,000 suspected government opponents in Matabeleland in the 1980s. The Zimbabwean Parliament was still debating President Mugabe's package of security laws that impose sentences of up to 20 years imprisonment for inciting civil disobedience and extinguish independent reporting.

The ruling Zanu (PF) was expected to win by virtue of its 36-seat majority.

There was uproar in Parliament, Jan 9, when David Coltart, the shadow justice minister for the Movement for Democratic Change, compared media controls planned by President Mugabe to Adolph Hitler's seizure of power in 1933.

While Zimbabwean Parliament was convulsed over the controversial General Laws Amendment Bill, which threatens to strip thousands of urban shack dwellers of their right to vote, pro-government militants invaded lawyers' offices and the state media tried to whip up paranoia over alleged "Rhodesian" bio-terrorism anthrax attacks. A government medical officer, Dr Jokonya Chirenda, later admitted that no trace of anthrax had been found at a post office closed by the scare.

Harare army's attitude unacceptable, says Pretoria: The South African government, Jan 11, came out strongly against veiled threats by the Zimbabwe defence force that it would only support President Robert Mugabe's re-election in the Zimbabwean presidential elections.

"If the purport of the statement is true, we find it totally unacceptable," foreign affairs spokesman Ronnie Mamoepa said. Both the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Office of the President, Jan 10, reacted strongly to reported statements by the Zimbabwe military leaders that they might not accept the outcome of the forthcoming elections.

He said democracy afforded every citizen the right to elect leaders to positions of authority. President Thabo Mbeki's spokesman Bheki Khumalo said earlier that the South African government could not support the army pre-empting the election outcome. "The role of the Zimbabwean army is to defend the country's law, democracy, and to serve the government of the day."

(SOURCE: *Times*, London, *Hindu*, Madras and *Asian Age*, New Delhi)

[Background Info. Zimbabwe, page 623:a]

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ALGERIA

a. Algiers, Abuja agree to link highways: Algeria and Nigeria have agreed to set up a committee to implement the project to build a highway linking Lagos and Algiers, a statement issued by Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo's office said, Jan 21.

Speaking at the inaugural session of the Nigeria-Algeria bi-national commission, Obasanjo said that the trans-Saharan highway project and the trans-Saharan gas pipeline were clear illustrations of cross-border ventures that were possible in Africa if the political will was there.

Nigeria, in concert with Algeria and other peace-loving African countries, will continue to work to resolve conflicts in the continent, Obasanjo said. He said that the establishment of the Nigeria-Algeria bi-national commission would provide a solid foundation for closer economic and commercial cooperation for the progress of the two countries and Africa, the statement said.

"Through the instrumentality of our bi-national commission, we must seek to impact positively on the lives of our people, by promoting people-oriented projects and exploring further avenues to consolidate our shared values of democracy, rule of law, social justice and good governance," Obasanjo said.

(SOURCE: *Le Matin*, Algiers)

ANGOLA

a. UN monitors in Luanda: Members of the UN monitoring mechanism on sanctions against UNITA are in Luanda to hold discussions with diplomats, civil society and President Jose Eduardo dos Santos' government, it was reported, Jan 16.

Wilton Fonseca, public information officer for the UN Office in Angola, said the delegation, headed by Chilean diplomat Juan Larrain, arrived in the capital, Jan 15.

"When they arrived, Ambassador Larrain told the press there was no doubt about the fact that sanctions against UNITA have been successful, and that during the recent UN sitting on Angola, it was decided that these sanctions would be maintained and there was no indication that they would be lifted until the conflict was resolved," Fonseca said.

He said that Larrain met military leaders, Jan 16, and said that he had been given a general idea of the military situation in the country. Facing questions regarding UN sanctions against UNITA, Larrain stressed that any decision would lie with the

The monitoring mechanism was created in 2000 to ensure that sanctions against the rebel movement were being implemented.

[Background Info. Angola, page 625:a]

b. 30 die in plane crash: An Angolan air force plane crashed in central Moxico province, Jan 27, killing at least 30 people, state radio reported.

The plane, an Antonov-12, had been chartered by the Moxico government and crashed as it was trying to land at Lwena, some 1,000 kilometres east of the capital Luanda, the report said.

Another 30 passengers were wounded and taken to hospital in Lwena, Moxico's capital.

The plane had taken off from Luanda and crashed near the town of Kanyengue, some eight kilometres from the Lwena airport, the radio reported.

An air force official in Luanda confirmed the crash but was unable to say how many people were aboard the plane.

Col Paulo de Oliveria told a press briefing that a technical fault probably caused the accident.

(SOURCE: *Times of Zambia*, Lusaka and *Asian Age*, New Delhi)

BOTSWANA

a. Pula will remain pegged to the rand: The Bank of Botswana has said it will not change the peg of the pula, Botswana's currency, to the rand despite the recent steep fall in the South African currency.

But the central bank has signalled its intention to "take appropriate action should it become necessary", it was reported, Jan 28.

The decision comes in the wake of intense speculation that Botswana might be forced to devalue its currency following the recent headlong plunge in the rand's value.

Its rapid depreciation, which has prompted SA authorities to appoint a judicial inquiry, has blunted the competitive edge of Botswana's products in SA, one of Botswana's main markets.

Unlike other members of the five-nation Southern African Customs Union, Namibia, Swaziland and Lesotho whose currencies are linked one-to-one to the SA rand, Botswana's pula is pegged to the rand. The rand is part of a basket of currencies to which the pula is pegged.

The basket is trade-weighted, a move that makes the rand, as the currency of Botswana's main trading partner, more dominant.

BURUNDI

a. Exiled former President Bagaza to return to Gabarone: Former Burundian President Jean-Baptiste Bagaza has plans to return to his country soon to negotiate his party's participation in transition institutions, it was reported, Jan 28.

In a telephone interview, Bagaza said he hoped to return to Burundi "as soon as possible", but did not give a date. He has been in exile in Uganda for the last five years. Bagaza was President of Burundi from 1976 to 1987. He heads the opposition pro-Tutsi PARENA party which signed the August 2000 Arusha peace accord for Burundi, but boycotted subsequent negotiations on implementation.

A transition government and parliament have now been installed in Burundi, in line with the Arusha accord, but PARENA has so far boycotted them. A list of 54 members of a new transition Senate is due to be published soon.

(SOURCE: *New Vision*, Kampala)

CAMEROON

a. Human rights activist stopped from leaving the country: Cameroonian human rights activist Abdoulaye Math was, Jan 16, stopped from leaving the country for Ireland, Amnesty International said.

Math's documents were confiscated and not returned.

Math, president of the Movement for the Defence of Freedom and Human Rights (MDDLH- French acronym) was arrested in the capital Yaounde, shortly before leaving for an international human rights meet in Dublin.

According to AI, he was arrested by members of the National Centre for External Research, detained for five hours and released, Jan 17. Although he pleaded for his documents during a meeting with the director of the state security apparatus, they were not given back, AI said. Math, who was also arrested in August by the same security office, was in Yaounde awaiting further meetings with the authorities. His organisation is based in northern Cameroon.

AI said the arrest "underlines a consistent pattern of intimidation and harassment of human rights defenders in Cameroon". It called on the government of Cameroon to stop restricting the right to movement and free speech, and respect international standard for the protection of rights defenders. AI also urged the government to ensure that security forces respect human rights.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

COMORO ISLANDS

a. Military ruler steps down: President Azaly Assoumani of Comoros Islands has stepped down, making way for a transitional government that will prepare for general elections under the terms of a

Assoumani said he would stand for the presidential elections in April. "I have decided to be among those who will have the honour of petitioning the votes of the Comoros people at the Union's presidential elections," said the former military strongman who took power on the main island of Grande Comore in a coup in 1999.

A new government of national unity, to be put in place on January 17, will oversee the transition to general elections which are scheduled for April 14.

Assoumani was entitled to lead the transitional administration but under the constitution, if he does so, he forfeits the right to stand at presidential elections.

Prime Minister Hamada Madi Bolero has also chosen to step down and has announced his candidature for April polls.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Comoro Islands, page 614:a]

CONGO (DR)

a. Volcano destroys Goma: A volcano has erupted in the Congolese town of Goma causing massive damage and up to 100,000 people are fleeing to Rwanda, local and the International Committee of the Red Cross reported, Jan 19.

"The town is completely destroyed, everything must be started up from scratch," said one man who returned, Jan 17, to find out the state of his home.

Mount Nyiragongo, which lies some 10 kilometres north of Goma, erupted at 5:00 am, Jan 17, and as the lava began destroying dozens of homes in its path on the outskirts of town, a large crowd began leaving in late afternoon.

Lava up to two metres high cut across the town, which burned for part of the night.

Half a million people rendered homeless: A river of lava flowed through the centre of the eastern Congolese town of Goma, Jan 19, burning everything in its path, creating a 5-foot high wall of cooling stone and leaving half a million people homeless.

The 130-foot wide path of molten rock made a fish hook pattern as it rolled down Mount Nyiragongo, 50 km to the north of Goma, passed through the central business district and flowed into Lake Kivu, sending sulphuric smoke and steam into the air. More than a dozen earthquakes shook the region every hour, some of them severe enough to send people running into the street in panic.

Hundreds of thousands of Goma residents, ordered to abandon their impoverished city as it burned, slept outdoors in neighbouring Gisenyi, Rwanda, seeking shelter under porches. More than half of Goma has already been consumed by the lava. A fire crackled at the art deco Black and White Dance Club as lava filled the patio and the dance floor. Propane gas tanks exploded throughout the town as lava entered more homes. Only a handful of police patrolled the otherwise empty city. Officials were trying to determine the number of casualties and concern

the fires, and international aid workers withdrew 50 km from the city because they were afraid the large quantities of methane gas that exists naturally in the lake would explode or bubble up and kill people close to shore.

Stephen Johnson, an official in the UN office for the co-ordination of humanitarian affairs in New York, said there were no indications the eruptions that began, Jan 17, had finished.

He said about 100,000 people had fled west into Congo, while 300,000 others crossed over to Rwanda in the east. The lava cut the only road connecting the two sides.

Adolphe Onusumba, head of the Rwandan-backed rebels who control Goma and the surrounding region, implored residents not to try to return to their homes. "We are declaring a state of emergency and urge people not to return to their homes because of the losses," he said in a radio broadcast from the devastated city.

"Right now, we have no office or home because they were destroyed by the lava", businessman Eloi Mboso Kiamfu said, Jan 18, as he prepared to leave for Gisenyi. "Goma almost does not exist any more".

Brian Baptie, a volcano seismologist at the British Geological Survey in Edinburgh, Scotland, said Nyiragongo is one of the most active volcanos in Africa.

"Although the lava moves quite fast going down the flanks, once on flat land it moves quite slowly so people can get out of the way if they have warning," he said.

"It's the refugee problem created that's the big cause for concern".

Florian Westphal, regional spokesman for the International Committee of the Red Cross, said two of the three water purification plants in the city of an estimated 500,000 inhabitants were no longer operational.

"We're discussing how to assess this situation", Westphal said. A large explosion had destroyed the main fuel depot at the port on the north end of Lake Kivu, he said.

The United Nations has sent several thousand military observers and peacekeepers into Congo following a ceasefire in the civil war that broke out in August 1998 in Goma.

—A UN official who evacuated civilian and military staff from Goma to the Rwanda capital, Kigali, said the deputy force commander, Gen Roberto Martinelli, arrived there, Jan 18, and would travel to Gisenyi and Goma to assess the situation.

Britain said on Jan 18, it will give \$2.9 million to help the volcano's victims. The International Development Secretary, Clare Short said \$1.4 million had been "immediately allocated" to humanitarian agencies on the ground in Congo.

The 11,381-foot Nyiragongo and 10,022-foot Nyamulagira volcanoes north of Goma are the only active ones in the Virunga chain of eight volcanoes that run east into Rwanda. Nyiragongo last erupted seriously in January 1977.

Refugees return despite warnings: Despite warnings, thousands of refugees, Jan 20, began returning to the Congolese city of Goma, which was destroyed by lava flowing from Mount Nyiragongo.

The UN relief organisation and other international agencies working in the Congo were urging the refugees to say put, but the refugees remained defiant. "We are Congolese", said one refugee after spending a third night in Gisenyi. "We want to stay near Goma".

Congolese rebels too appealed to the refugees not to return. The rebel group—Congolese Rally for Democracy—warned refugees, who had fled to the Rwandan town of Gisenyi, that it was still too dangerous to return.

The United Nations and the Rwandan government, Jan 20, urged refugees to gather in approved camps where aid agencies can deliver food, water and shelter, but most Congolese just want to go home. People are crowded on sidewalks, sleeping on the shore of Lake Kivu and drinking water from the heavily polluted lake without food or sanitation, causing UN official to fear a possible cholera outbreak.

Laura Mello, spokeswoman for the UN World Food Programme, said the agency distributed 8.5 tonnes of high energy biscuit to refugees, Jan 19, and that the agency has 7,000 tonnes of cooking oil and maize flour in the area. But at the moment we can't distribute that because people do not have their cooking items," she said. "We hope people will go into the camps. There is no way we can distribute food in Goma. With the volcano, it is simply too dangerous".

Three UN volcanologists will study the volcano to determine whether it is safe to distribute aid in the city, said Oluseyi Bajulaive, the head of the UN refugee agency in Rwanda. Many of the mostly urban Congolese don't want to go to camps, where they would live in improvised tents made from plastic sheeting.

Most said they would prefer to go to other Congolese cities, such as Bukavu, Kalemie or Kisangani, and make a new start. "Why should you put us in small camps...when our country is so big?" said Fifi Banza, a refugee trying to get on a boat back to Congo.

Like two spokes extending from Mount Nyiragongo, lava flows 50 metres wide and up to 3 metres deep in places, cutting through the city. Sighted from a Rwandan Air Force helicopter, a small black cone could be seen forming in what was once a green banana plantation on the border with Rwanda.

The bright red lava poured southwest, covering one-third of the runway at Goma airport, destroying the city's Roman Catholic cathedral and thousands of homes.

Quakes, downpours compound misery: Earthquakes and downpours, Jan 23, compounded the misery of hundreds of thousands of people in northeastern Congo, where a volcanic eruption destroyed nearly half of the region's largest city.

The eruption of Mount Nyiragongo, January 17, has left 10,000 families without shelter and hundreds of thousands without any livelihood. Earthquakes rattled the region, some of them strong enough to destroy buildings that escaped the three huge lava flows that cut through the centre of the Goma. Across the border in Rwanda, which escaped the lava, the ministry of local government reported that 288 homes and 19 schools had been destroyed by the almost hourly earthquakes.

Vulcanologists have said Nyiragongo's eruption are over, but the earthquakes will continue as the magma inside the mountain settles. In the Rwandan town of Ruhengeri, 50 kilometres northeast of Goma, the aid agency Oxfam said it was preparing an isolation space for possible cholera cases after some of the Congolese refugees in its camp complained of feeling ill. Oxfam regional director Rob Wilkinson said an initial report that cholera had been detected at the camp was based on "faulty communication".

100 killed as petrol station explodes: A petrol station exploded in Goma, Jan 21, killing around hundred people as a river of lava from nearby Mount Nyiragongo continued its deadly course across the city in Democratic Republic of Congo.

The service station was in a largely deserted northern district of the city, where mount Nyiragongo's eruption, Jan 17, sent thousands of residents fleeing across the Rwandan border to the adjacent town of Gisenyi.

Earlier a series of earth tremors shook the Goma area and were felt in several Rwanda cities including the capital Kigali, some 120 km away.

According to eyewitnesses, looters were trying to steal petrol when the blast occurred, but there was no word of casualties.

Tens of thousands of Goma residents streamed back into the lakeside city, Jan 20, over the objections of humanitarian organisations warning of air and water pollution from the lava and the risk of further volcanic activity.

The lava flow, still bubbling and exploding intermittently and reaching temperatures in the hundreds of degrees, has split Goma in two, but can be crossed at some points. The southern section of the city has remained deserted because of heavy gas emissions. Shops in Goma remained closed.

Large areas of the town were totally destroyed. In other areas the lava has raised the ground level by several feet of black rocky gunk, leaving entire streetfronts intact above the lava line.

Lava flows continued to smoke and bubble with small explosions, Jan 20, and the air was thick with foul-smelling gas.

The UN has set up two camps near Gisenyi to feed and shelter the 300,000 people affected by the eruption.

As of Jan 20, less than 5,000 people had gone to these "transit facilities". Instead they streamed back to Goma in their tens of thousands, possessions in hand, to try to rebuild their lives.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi, *Times*, London and *Statesman*, Calcutta)

EGYPT

a. Muslim Brotherhood's dream of Islamic state: Dr Gamal Hishmet, member of Parliament and University professor, is the modern face of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood, says a report, Jan 21.

In the push to rid the world of Osama Bin Laden and his ilk, the role of men like Dr Hishmet and the Brotherhood, the forebear of all Islamic groups, remains uncertain.

The groups' grassroots appeal is evident as Dr Hishmet strolls along the market street of this provincial capital in the Nile delta, ignoring the mud oozing over his shoes and the stench from overflowing sewers. "Peace be upon you," many merchants call out, remarking that he remains the only politician they see apart from election day.

The government of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak recognises the Brotherhood as its only serious rival and has never considered it benign. In November, 22 members who had been arrested 2001, went on trial in a military court on charges of sedition and recruiting people to an illegal organisation. The group has been banned since 1954. Yet, the group thrives largely as a result of the appeal of men like Dr Hishmet. He is one of 17 Muslim Brotherhood Members of Parliament—all elected as independents to get around the formal ban on their movement.

Supporters say the best antidote to Muslim extremists would be to legalise the Brotherhood. But the Muslim Brothers have never overcome suspicions about whether they have truly jettisoned violence or whether their one-size-fits-all slogan, "Islam Is the Solution", masks a link to the dark side of Islamic politics.

Hassan al-Banna, the schoolteacher who founded the group in 1928, articulated the dream of resurrecting the golden age of the Muslim empire. "It is the nature of Islam to dominate," he said, "not to be dominated, to impose its law on all nations and to extend its power to the entire planet". That vision inspired every Muslim group formed since.

"All fundamentalist groups have one goal: Setting up an Islamic state with no borders", said Muhammad Salah, a journalist who writes about Islamic movements in Egypt.

(SOURCE: *New York Times* / *Asian Age*, New Delhi)

ERITREA

a. 25 Ethiopian PoWs repatriated: Twenty-five Ethiopian prisoners of war (PoWs) were repatriated from Eritrea, Jan 15, according to a press release from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

It said the operation took place, under ICRC auspices, at a crossing point on the Mereb river between the towns of Rama in northern Ethiopia and Adi Quala in southern Eritrea.

"The repatriated PoWs had been registered and visited regularly by ICRC delegates during the period of their captivity at Nakfa internment camp," the statement said. "They all expressed their wish to return to Ethiopia."

The Eritrean foreign ministry said it had "time and again" expressed its readiness to release and repatriate all Ethiopian PoWs from the border war between the two countries, in accordance with the Algiers peace agreement and Geneva conventions. But, in a statement, it accused the Ethiopian government of "continuing to hinder the process". In this context, the Eritrean embassy in Nairobi described the release of PoWs as "significant".

b. Four boys killed in mine accident: Four Eritrean teenage boys were killed in a mine accident near the town of Senafe recently, the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) said, Jan 25.

UNMEE spokesman Jean Victor Nkolo told a press briefing, Jan 25, that three more boys were seriously injured in the accident, which occurred in a "marked minefield" on January 22. He said the children had been given mine awareness training. An investigation into the incident is underway.

"All possible means will be used to try to prevent a recurrence of this tragic accident," UNMEE said in a statement. It added that 69 people had so far been killed by mines in the Temporary Security Zone (TSZ) since the two countries ended their border war in 2000.

(SOURCE: *Monitor*, Kampala)

GABON

a. Ebola death toll rises to 34: WHO said, Jan 24, that up to January 20, the Gabonese government had reported 26 confirmed cases of Ebola haemorrhagic fever, including 23 deaths.

Another 22 suspected cases were under investigation in Gabon, WHO said in its 15th update on the Ebola outbreak in northeastern Gabon and across the border in the Republic of Congo.

It said an international team of Ebola experts was operational in Congo, in the Gabonese capital, Libreville, and in Makokou in Ogooue-Ivindo Province, where the affected areas in Gabon are located. Discussions were being held in Gabon with national and provincial authorities on the return of the team to Mekambo, one of the affected areas.

The team had been moved from Mekambo to Makokou because of hostility from villagers who insisted on performing cultural rites on Ebola victims, despite attempts by the medical team to stop the practices.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Gabon, page 629:a]

KENYA

a. UNHCR head accepts Nairobi corruption report: An investigation by the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) has found evidence that staff members of the UN refugee agency in Nairobi illegally took bribes from refugees seeking permanent resettlement in third countries, it was reported, Jan 28.

"I and thousands of other past and present UNHCR staff worldwide who have devoted their lives to helping refugees are both shamed and outraged by the despicable actions described in this report," UNHCR head Ruud Lubbers said in a statement in which he accepted the investigation's findings.

"There is no excuse, no defence, for such contemptible behaviour. Those who prey on poor and desperate refugees must be punished to the full extent of the law," Lubbers added.

The investigation, carried out at the request of UNHCR, found that up to 70 people were involved in a complex scheme during the late 1990s to extort money from refugees for services at the Nairobi office, including demanding bribes of between US \$3,000 and \$5,000 to ensure resettlement, UNHCR said. UNHCR does not charge for resettlement programmes.

Direct threats made against a number of persons who tried to assist with the investigation forced five UNHCR employees, including the then country representative, to be evacuated, the UN refugee agency said.

b. Pakistani trader charged with theft: A Pakistani national was, Jan 27, charged with stealing and evading to pay duty amounting to more than Sh7 million.

This is part of ongoing investigations into duty diversion cases by police and the Kenya Revenue Authority in which the government lost over Sh 500 million.

Mohammed Afzal, a motor vehicles dealer denied the charges before the Mombasa Chief Magistrate Mrs Anne Okwengu.

She issued a warrant of arrest against Afzal's co-accused, Babar Hussain Abid Chaudury Ali Mohamed, after he failed to appear in court to plead to the stealing and duty evasion charges.

The production of Afzal who had been in police custody since, Jan 23, has been prompted by a habeas corpus application filed, Jan 25, by his advocate, Japhet Asige.

c. Poachers kill nine elephants in Isiolo: Poachers have killed nine elephants in Isiolo district, it was reported, Jan 15.

Fresh carcasses of the elephants with the tusks removed were found by the residents at Barambate area in Kula Mawe location, 30 kilometres east of Shaba National Reserve, Jan 11.

But the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) said only two elephants were killed.

KWS Public Relations Manager, Ms Connie Maina, noted that the elephants were killed when they strayed into an "unprotected" area. She said that normally KWS personnel guide elephants and other animals which stray into unprotected areas whenever they are spotted.

The residents who reported the matter to the Isiolo County Council officials said they had seen strangers in the area a few days before the incident.

The Isiolo council chairman, Dabaso Halkano, Jan 14, confirmed the killing of the elephants and the activities of the poachers in the region.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

LIBYA

a. Lockerbie deal with US likely: The United States and Libya are close to a deal that could take Libya off Washington's list of terror sponsors, *USA Today* reported, Jan 23.

Citing senior US officials, the newspaper said the deal would require Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi's government to pay as much as \$ 6 billion in compensation for the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103.

The paper quoted one official as saying Libya understood the need to accept responsibility for the bombing of the airliner.

The London-to-New York flight blew up over Lockerbie, Scotland, on December 21, 1988, killing 270 people, most of them Americans.

Libyan officials told the newspaper a final deal with Washington would not be struck until after the man convicted of placing a bomb on the airliner completes an appeal.

Abdel Basset al-Megrahi, a former Libyan secret agent was convicted in January 2001, at a special Scottish court at Camp Zeist, Netherlands.

His appeal hearing, which lawyers estimate will last about three weeks, opens, Jan 23.

US President George W Bush would make the final decision.

(SOURCE: *Deccan Herald*. Bangalore)

[Background Info. Libya, page 631:a]

NIGERIA

a. Hundreds feared dead in ammo blast: More than 500 bodies of drowned people were retrieved from two canals in Lagos after bomb explosions from a burning military arms depot triggered panic in Nigeria's biggest city, witnesses said, Jan 28.

"I have counted more than 60 bodies here. Ambulances and families have taken away more than 200 from this canal alone," a witness said at the Oke-Afa canal near the devastated Ikeja military barracks.

Soldiers and other rescue workers brought out between 200 and 300 bodies from the adjoining Pako canal, local residents who helped in the rescue operation said. Other witnesses put the death toll much higher.

A reporter on the scene counted more than 10 bodies brought out by soldiers. Lagos State governor Bola Tinubu arrived at the Pako canal to supervise the rescue effort and was joined by police Chief Okiro.

State television showed pictures of piles of bodies by the canal surrounded by large crowds of onlookers.

Many people, mostly children, were missing and thousands homeless after the multiple explosions, police said.

"Many people have reported missing children, and there are children looking for their parents," Lagos police commissioner Mike Okiro said, Jan 28.

"I have reports from the field that many people in the Ikeja area have taken refuge at police stations," Okiro said. He said he had no information on casualties.

The army, which moved quickly to dispel speculation about a military takeover of power in the coup-prone country, has made no mention of any deaths or injuries.

Explosions continued to rock the city sporadically late into the night, fuelling an inferno raging in the barracks since the first blast late, Jan 27 afternoon. At least 10 bodies were seen on the city's streets a day after the accident, witnesses said.

"The two in Oshodi were electrocuted after an overhead electric cable fell over them as they ran during the confusion," a resident of the area said.

The *Independent Guardian* newspaper said its reporter saw about a dozen bodies at a street market where the army says a fire started and then spread to the armoury. There was no immediate confirmation of the figures.

Witnesses reported extensive damage inside the barracks and in nearby homes and public buildings, including a church which was completely wrecked. The building was apparently empty at the time.

Coming at the height of political tension in Nigeria, speculation swept the country of over 110 million people that the army was about to retake power. Brigadier-General George Emdin, commander of the Ikeja brigade, said the explosions were mainly from bombs.

"We had high calibre bombs there," Emdin said when he and Lagos governor Bola Tinubu went on the air to reassure Nigerians. He said the army had been planning to improve storage facilities at the rusty armoury for years.

"It is an accident and there is no political undertone to it," Emdin said, apologising on behalf of the army for the explosions and the panic they triggered.

"All residents of the cantonment have been evacuated...For now the situation is getting better," he said. Tinubu said President Olusegun Obasanjo, who was in Lagos earlier, Jan 27, was safe.

Burning shrapnel from the blasts also lit fires that caved in the roof of a church on the top floor of a four-storey building in the nearby neighbourhood of Oshodi. A radio and television repair shop there was destroyed by a shell, which left jagged fragments jutting from the ground nearby.

"I was so afraid, I ran away without being able to save even a pocket radio," said the shopowner, Sani Mohammed. Next door, the windows and ceilings tiles of the Mandela Hospital were destroyed, though all patients were safely evacuated, hospital staff said. State and military officials went on national television to appeal for calm. They said the explosions were an accident at an old facility and assured the population they were not an indication of military unrest.

A police officer said the blasts had apparently been touched off by an explosion at a nearby gas station.

This could not be independently confirmed.

An army spokesman said a fire spread to the munitions depot, but had no details on where it started.

The oil-rich nation of Nigeria is Africa's most populous country, and Lagos is its largest city.

The President, Olusegun Obasanjo, toured the base, Jan 28, addressing hundreds of soldiers and their families who had fled the barracks. He promised the military would investigate.

b. NLC heeds court order, calls off strike: After a brush with security agents, the leadership of the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) in Lagos, Jan 17, suspended its two-day-old nationwide strike over fuel price hikes.

However, in Abuja, NLC Vice President Isa Tijani, said he was not aware the strike had been called off.

The NLC decision announced, Jan 17, in Lagos through a communique signed by its vice president Comrade Daniel Adekola and the general secretary, Comrade John Odah, said the suspension was to comply with an earlier court ruling declaring the strike illegal.

In a ruling, Jan 17, an Abuja Federal High Court had declared the industrial action which commenced same day nationwide as illegal.

c. University expels 35 students: Thirty-five students of the University of Abuja, among them a final year law student, have lost their studentship at the university, it was reported, Jan 22.

While some were expelled for their involvements in examination malpractices others lost their studentship owing to their inability to cope with the rigours of academic work. A statement by the Registrar of the institution, Soni S. Sule, said the expulsion of the students was based on the approval of the 78th regular meeting of the Senate held in 2001.

Eleven of those expelled are from the regular programme of the institution while six and 18 students were drawn from the Distance Learning and Consultancy Services Unit respectively.

d. Hundreds flee after mob kills seven policemen: Hundreds of people fled a rural town in Nigeria's northern Katsina state fearing reprisal attacks after a mob killed seven policemen, residents said, Jan 20.

The incident in Danja, a rural trading town, occurred, Jan 18, after a scuffle between a policeman and a local resident escalated into a fight. In the ensuing chaos, the seven officers and three local people were killed. "Most people in Danja fled fearing revenge attacks by the police," Samaila Usman, a trader who escaped from the town, said.

Witnesses said over 200 armed policemen had taken positions on the outskirts of the town since Jan 20, but a police source said the reinforcements were there to ensure there were no further outbreaks of violence.

Similar incidents in which policemen or soldiers were killed in communal unrest in Nigeria attracted reprisal attacks by security forces. In October 2001, more than 200 people were killed and seven villages razed in central region Benue State, by soldiers in apparent reprisal for the killing of 19 officers by Tiv militiamen. Two years earlier, the town of Odi in the southern Niger delta was destroyed by soldiers after armed militants killed 12 policemen. Hundreds were killed.

(SOURCE: *Post Express*, Lagos, *Indian Express*, New Delhi and *Hindu*, Madras)

RWANDA

a. UN Tribunal Registrar leaves Kigali amid new standoff: International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) Registrar Adama Dieng, Jan 27, ended a three-day visit to Rwanda, dominated by news that genocide survivors are suspending cooperation with the tribunal.

Dieng met survivors' groups IBUKA and AVEGA but failed to persuade them to change their minds.

The Registrar said in Kigali that the meetings had been "generally positive", but said he regretted the groups' decision to maintain their witness boycott call.

"It is important that they reverse that decision, otherwise they will be responsible for what I could call an injustice to victims," said Dieng.

"If I were a victim I would prefer to be harassed than see the person who had raped me swaggering down the streets of Europe and the world."

The Registrar said he thought some genocide survivors' leaders had been swayed by this argument, although "I would not say there is unanimity".

"I hope," he continued, "that they will come round to a wiser and more moderate position."

IBUKA and AVEGA announced, Jan 24, that they were suspending cooperation with the Tribunal "until it has corrected all its mistakes and accorded sufficient importance to victims". The decision could affect the tribunal's ability to bring witnesses from Rwanda.

[Background Info. Rwanda, page 620:a]

b. Opposition unites against President Kagame: A consortium of political groups opposed to Rwandan President Paul Kagame have formed a front to oust him, it was reported, Jan 16.

The Rwandan Democratic Alliance, (RDA) is a merger between Congrès Démocratique Africain, (CDA), and the Movement for Peace, Democracy and Development, MPDD. In a statement issued, Jan 15, RDA said that the formation of the front has been a "result of intensive political consultations between various Rwandan opposition political groups, carried out in Kigali and Brussels from November 18 to December 31, 2001."

The alliance spokesman, Sixbert Musangamfura, said that RDA was formed on December 31, 2001.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

MALAWI

a. SADC summit promotes peace agenda: The Southern African Development Community (SADC) summit ended in the Malawi city of Blantyre, Jan 14, with encouraging indications in the context of the ongoing peace efforts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

A major development during the summit was an unplanned meeting between Congolese President Joseph Kabila and the leaders of two armed opposition groups - Adolphe Yumba Onusumba of the Rwandan-backed Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie-Goma and Jean- Pierre Bemba of the Ugandan-backed Mouvement de Liberation du Congo.

Onusumba and Bemba were invited to attend the summit as observers. Kabila had earlier said that such a meeting at the summit "was not on his agenda". No specific details of the meeting were available.

In response to Burundi's announcement recently that it would withdraw its troops from the Congo if Kinshasa ended its support for the Forces pour la Defense de la Democratie, a Burundian armed opposition movement, Kabila said this was a "positive development". However, he added that announcement of the intent and the actual withdrawal of troops were "two different things", the *Daily Times* of Malawi reported.

While Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni attended the summit upon special invitation, Rwandan President Paul Kagame declined, after having first accepted. Instead, Rwanda sent a high-level delegation. Uganda and Rwanda have troops in the Congo backing rebels opposed to Kabila. Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe also have troops there, but in support of Kabila's forces.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MAURITANIA

a. WFP approves US \$200,000 in emergency aid: The World Food Programme (WFP) has approved the distribution of 400 mt of wheat to 6,785 victims of adverse weather in Mauritania.

The emergency aid, worth some US \$200,000, will be distributed in February, WFP said, Jan 25. Mauritania has been hit by drought since 2001. Then, in January, unexpected heavy rains and cold killed at least 25 people as well as 80,000 camels, cattle and sheep. Some 5,500 families were affected.

The agency plans to provide more emergency aid to stricken populations in the northwest African nation. A WFP team is due to complete on February 4 an evaluation of food needs, the number of people needing help and the expected duration of deliveries in the affected areas.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MOROCCO

a. UN to rule on Rabat oil deal: UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan is to assess the legal aspects of oil exploration off the disputed coast of Western Sahara by mid-February.

The Moroccan oil deal caused widespread international protest in 2001, it was reported, Jan 25.

According to a report by *Upstream*, the US explorer Kerr-McGee and the French oil company Total-FinaElf will know by mid-February whether Annan regards two technical reconnaissance agreements signed in 2001 with Rabat for acreage

off Moroccan-occupied Western Sahara as contravening international law. In 2001, Moroccan government allocated Total-FinaElf the entire southern maritime zone south of Kerr-McGee's own Boujdour Offshore permit off Western Sahara, which runs right up to the Moroccan border.

The publication of the deal between the Moroccan government, illegally occupying Western Sahara, and Kerr-McGee and Total-FinaElf in October 2001 caused massive protest. Saharawi President Mohamed Abdelaziz in November 2001 wrote to UN envoy James Baker III, warning of dire consequences if the US and French firms began prospecting for oil.

b. Release all prisoners, says US government: The United States government has hailed the recent release of prisoners by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el-Hamra and Rio de Oro (Polisario Front), but called for the release of all prisoners in the Western Sahara conflict, it was reported, Jan 18.

On Jan 17, the 115 prisoners, who were released earlier, were repatriated by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), aboard a chartered aircraft and handed over to Moroccan authorities. They included the longest-held Moroccan prisoner, captured in 1975. In a State Department statement, Jan 17, the US said it would like Polisario and Morocco to work with the UN to resolve the conflict. The release of the prisoners, the statement added, was a positive move towards fulfilling international humanitarian law.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MOZAMBIQUE

a. Pretoria and Maputo sign MoU: The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between South Africa and Mozambique, Jan 16, is a practical implementation of the commitment of the two governments to regional cooperation within Southern Africa.

Speaking during the signing ceremony in the Mozambican capital, Maputo, transport minister Dullah Omar said it indicated that the two governments were proactive in facilitating investment in the private sector.

Minister Omar said the signing means that there are various types of partnerships at different levels which have been identified and to which both governments are committed.

Government to government partnerships will provide an environment in which investors can feel confident to invest.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

SENEGAL

a. Cold weather kills 17: A cold spell accompanied by heavy rain recently in northern Senegal killed 17 people and an unknown number of livestock, an official from the Senegalese civil defence ministry said, Jan 15.

"There was a cold snap for two or three days when the temperature dropped from 40 degrees (centigrade) to 16 degrees. A lot of rain, around 115 mm, also fell over a couple of days last week," Capitaine Moro Sow, operations officer in the civil defence ministry, said. The region of Podor in northern Senegal was the worst affected by the bad weather, he said, adding that some farmland in the area was submerged.

The 17 deaths, including two children, were caused by the sudden drop in temperature and not by the floods, Sow said. "People are not used to cold weather and they were not prepared for it," he said. A meeting, Jan 14, organised by the prefect in Podor, drew up a list of emergency needs for the local population which included blankets, mattresses, food for livestock and petrol.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SIERRA LEONE

a. Weapons bonfire marks end of civil war: Sierra Leone's government declared an official end to 10 years of war, Jan 18, setting alight thousands of weapons collected from former combatants in a bonfire outside the capital.

Wielding torches, Sierra Leone's President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah and Ghana's President John Kufuor set fire, Jan 18, to 2, 991 rifles and automatic weapons gathered in a huge pile.

"The flames of war, not so long ago, were mercilessly consuming thousands of innocent lives and countless properties in virtually every part of our country," President Kabbah said at the ceremony just outside of the capital, Freetown.

Sierra Leone has been torn apart by war since 1991, when rebels of the Revolutionary United Front launched an insurgency to oust the government and take over the nation's lucrative diamond fields.

"Today we are happy that those flames of war are being extinguished. I declare the war is over and the curfew lifted," President Kabbah said to the cheer of thousands in the West African nation.

Interim rebel leader Issa Sesay welcomed the move, saying it signified the start of a peaceful future.

"Let this be an indication of the declared intentions of all the former fighters that violence and destruction have indeed ended".

Thousands of civilians were killed in the war, while thousands of others were raped or maimed by rebels who chopped off arms and legs with impunity.

But after a failed advance on the capital in May 2000, the rebels agreed to a peace deal—signed in November 2000—under intense pressure from UN, British and Guinean troops.

The UN bolstered the accord with a nationwide disarmament programme that ended earlier in January. UN officials say 46,453 rebels and pro-government militia fighters have turned over their weapons. An agreement has been signed with the UN to establish a special tribunal for prosecution those responsible for the atrocities during the 10-year civil war.

[Background Info. Sierra Leone, page 632:a]

b. War crimes tribunal agreement signed: - The UN and the government of Sierra Leone, Jan 16, signed an agreement setting up a Special Court to prosecute those who committed war crimes during Sierra Leone's 10-year civil war, the UN reported.

The tribunal has the power "to prosecute persons who bear the greatest responsibility" for serious violations of international humanitarian and Sierra Leonean law which have taken place since November 30, 1996, the date of a failed peace agreement between the government and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF).

It will have the power to prosecute those who committed crimes against civilians including murder, torture and rape as well as those who "committed or ordered the commission of serious violations against the Geneva Convention."

It will not have jurisdiction over anyone who was under the age of 15 years at the time of the alleged crime. The independence of the court will be assured by the appointment by the UN Secretary-General of a prosecutor as well as the majority of the trial and appeals judges, the UN reported.

c. Minister of justice escapes mayhem at university: Attorney general and minister of justice, Solomon Berewa, Jan 23, escaped mayhem at Fourah Bay College.

Berewa ran away when two political heavyweights were at each other's throat.

Barely four months to the May parliamentary and presidential elections, political opponents have started drawing daggers at each other.

The latest battlefield was the Adjai Crowther Amphitheatre, Jan 23, where People's Democratic Alliance (P.D.A) leader, Rtd. Capt. Abdul Rahman Kamara exchanged punches with Dr. Mohamed Kromah.

Dr. Kromah who is the head of the political science department at Fourah Bay College (FBC) was the chairman of a panel discussion organised by the Political Science Society of college. "Sierra Leone in a post war political dilemma, the war forward" was the topic for discussion.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SOMALIA

a. Pirates hold 18 of ship crew hostage: Pirates who attacked a cargo ship in Somali waters are holding 18 crew members hostage for ransom, an international piracy watch group said, Jan 18.

The ship, Greek-owned *MV Princess Sarah*, was attacked, Jan 14, off the coast of the troubled east-African country by heavily armed raiders, a spokesman for the Kuala Lumpur-based International Maritime Bureau said.

"They came in five small boats armed with automatic rifles and took the crew members hostage," the spokesman said. First reports of the attack came, Jan 14, when British Coast Guard officials said they received a distress call via satellite from

the 6,000-ton *Princess Sarah*, which is registered in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. The ship's captain reported that he was being fired on by pirates who ordered him to stop so they could board, British officials said.

That alerted the French army in Djibouti, Somali officials and the piracy watchdog organisation, a privately funded offshoot of the International Chamber of Commerce.

A French boat was on its way from Djibouti to the stricken ship, but was not expected to arrive for a few days, the Maritime Bureau spokesman said. He said the attackers had relayed messages to the ship's owners demanding \$200,000 to release the crew, believed to be Ukrainian, Egyptian, Lebanese and Syrian.

"They say they have no more drinkable water on board and only days of fuel left," the spokesman said. *Princess Sarah* was not believed to be carrying any cargo at the time of the attack.

In Somalia, businessmen in Bossaso, a port in the north-eastern region known as Puntland, said the hijacked ship was being held near Hafun, about 270 km northeast of Bossaso.

Abi Haji Yussuf, Puntland's interior minister, said he had no information about the incident.

b. 12 killed in southern clashes: At least a dozen people were killed and more than 30 wounded in fighting which broke out near the town of Qoryoley, 130 km southwest of Mogadishu, local sources said, Jan 24.

The fighting was concentrated in the villages of Manay Murug, Bandar and Dharshinley, all on the banks of the Shabelle river, west of Qoryoley. The clashes, which first broke out, Jan 22, involved the Jido and Rer Shabelle clans, and fighting was reportedly still raging, Jan 24. Muhammad Usman Gutale, a resident of Qoryoley, said the villages of Bandar (Rer Shabelle) and Dharshinley (Jido) were burned.

"We could see the flames from Qoryoley, seven kilometres away," he said.

The dead included at least five children and two women, who drowned after the boat they were using to escape the fighting capsized in the Shabelle river, Muhammad said. Most of the dead were from the Rer Shabelle clan, he said.

c. 33 killed by meningitis in Somaliland: Thirty three people have died in an outbreak of meningitis in the self-declared republic of Somaliland, north-western Somalia, according to the UN's World Health Organisation (WHO).

"As of 16 January, the ministry of health in Somalia [Somaliland] has reported a total of 144 cases, including 33 deaths," WHO said in a report. The disease first broke out in October 2001. Collaborative tests identified the disease as 'Neisseria meningitidis serogroup A', the WHO said.

"This type of the disease, if not controlled quickly, can spread rapidly and become an epidemic, especially in a crowded setting of cities", a WHO source said, Jan 22.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SUDAN

a. Rebels sign truce pact with govt: The government of Sudan and rebels fighting in the south of the country signed a ceasefire, Jan 19, for the disputed Nuba Mountains region.

The six-month renewable agreement calls for the cessation of hostilities within 72 hours. An international monitoring unit of military and civilian personnel from Western Europe and North America will oversee the implementation of the ceasefire.

The agreement was reached after talks mediated by American and Swiss negotiators in the Alpine resort of Buergerstock, overlooking Lake Lucerne.

"Today (Jan 19) is an important day for the people of the Nuba Mountains, and hopefully an important day for Sudan," said Josef Bucher, Swiss head of the negotiating team.

Nutris Siddig, head of the Sudanese government delegation and Sudanese People's Liberation Army, signed copies of the agreement at a ceremony, Jan 19, and then shook hands to the applause of their delegations.

[Background Info. Sudan, page 597:a]

b. 1671 rebels surrender under amnesty law: A total of 1671 rebels have surrendered under the amnesty law and given certificates by the Amnesty Commission in the last one and half years, it was reported, Jan 28.

"Over 700 other rebels based in Sudan have also sent signals of willingness to surrender under the amnesty law and we are ready to receive them," Monsignor Thomas Kisembo of the Amnesty Commission, said in Kasese, Jan 23. Kisembo and the Rev. Fr. John Karyeregyeza, the Kasese-based Amnesty Commissioner in-charge of western region, were speaking during a talk show programme on Messiah Radio in Kasese town.

He said 287 rebels had surrendered in central region and 185 in Kasese.

Karyeregyeza encouraged the 700 Kony rebels based in Sudan and willing to surrender under the amnesty law, to report to any embassy, the police, UPDF army detachment, local councillors, magistrate or religious leaders.

c. Two million in need of food aid: Severe food deficits are anticipated in parts of southern Sudan, mainly due to population displacements, according to the United Nations.

In total, some 155,000 mt of food aid would be required to assist about 2 million displaced, drought-affected or otherwise vulnerable people, the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and World Food Programme (WFP) reported, Jan 17.

In March 2001, estimates were that as many as three million Sudanese were threatened by hunger as a result of the combined effect of drought and civil war.

Cereal production in the 2001-'02 marketing year (November to October) was forecast at 4.8 million mt, 38 per cent up on the previous year and 9 per cent above the average of the preceding five years, the agencies reported.

The availability of cereals would be "markedly improved" in 2002, but a sharp fall in the price of sorghum - a staple crop in many parts of Sudan - in major producing areas could result in financial ruin for farmers and substantial reductions in the area planted in 2003, they said.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi and *Hindu*, Madras)

TANZANIA

a. Tanzanite-terrorist links denied: Visiting Tanzanian Prime Minister, Fredrick Sumaye, Jan 21, denied any links between firms involved in mining of Tanzanite and terrorist groups, a report from Nairobi said.

He said investigations had failed to yield any links between the mineral firms and terrorist organisations. He was reacting to claims by US authorities that members of the Al Qaeda terrorist organisation had infiltrated the mineral business.

US firms had in turn boycotted buying the precious mineral from Tanzania. He said a Tanzanian delegation would visit the US later in February to clear the air. The Tanzanian leader who is on his first official visit to Kenya was received by the minister for lands and settlement Noah Katana Ngala, assistant minister Peter Odoyo and the Tanzanian High Commissioner to Kenya Maj Gen M S Sarakiya.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Tanzania, page 634:a]

UGANDA

a. World Bank cautions against privatisation: The World Bank has warned Uganda that the sale of the remaining 38 state firms lined up for privatisation could have a negative impact on the country's economy if it is rushed through, it was reported, Jan 21.

Robert Blake, the World Bank's programme manager in Uganda, said recently that most of the companies lined up for sale in the next round of divestiture are in crucial sectors of the economy such as electricity, water and sanitation as well as agriculture. They include the two arms of the former Uganda Electricity Board, the generation and distribution companies, National Water and Sewerage Corporation, National Insurance Corporation and the National Housing and Construction Company. Up to 108 parastatals have so far been privatised in the programme, started in 1993. "The privatisation of the institutions will have a great impact on the economy. So it should be done carefully and slowly," said Blake.

(SOURCE: *New Vision*, Kampala)

ZAMBIA

a. Permanent secretaries dropped in major shake-up: President Mwanawasa, Jan 23, cautioned newly appointed permanent secretaries to avoid being extravagant by strictly adhering to budgeted provisions and retired several officials at senior management level.

Announcing the names of 48 permanent secretaries and special assistants, secretary to the cabinet Leslie Mbula said in Lusaka the President expected them to adhere to estimates of expenditure and not unplanned for expenditure.

The President also noted that public service management had become a challenging and demanding task and it was therefore important that senior managers in ministries created a conducive environment to ensure quality service to the people of Zambia.

Mbula said the President also directed the permanent secretaries to deal firmly with dishonest practices to enhance accountability and ensure a corruption free public service.

(SOURCE: *Times of Zambia*, Lusaka)

ZIMBABWE

a. 10,000 soldiers deployed to campaign for Mugabe: The Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) has sent 10,000 soldiers on leave and deployed them throughout the country to campaign for President Robert Mugabe's re-election in the presidential plebiscite due on March 9 and 10, it was reported, Jan 17.

The Financial Gazette also reported that the soldiers would be paid an extra \$10,000 a month each for their work in the presidential election campaign, in addition to their normal salaries.

The soldiers went on leave from the beginning of January 2002, and will remain in the field until the presidential election is concluded.

The soldiers are drawn from various battalions around the country, although authoritative sources said the Presidential guard battalion had contributed the biggest single chunk to the 10,000 troops deployed for the campaign.

The soldiers were deployed to campaign for Mugabe in their own home areas.

b. Police break up MDC rally; 18 injured: At least 18 people were injured in Bulawayo when police and a mob of youths of the ruling ZANU-PF party broke up an opposition rally, the Movement for Democratic Change said, Jan 20.

The residential areas around White City stadium were saturated with teargas as about 100 riot police drove MDC supporters away from the rally, MDC secretary-general Welshman Ncube said.

Ruling party militias occupied the stadium, Jan 19, and attacked MDC supporters as they arrived for the rally.

MDC youths were whipped and one lost his eye, Ncube said.

The clash took place hours before Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo was due in Harare for talks with Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe over the Commonwealth-drafted Abuja agreement which demands Mugabe restore the rule of law, ensure elections are peaceful and transparent and stops illegal occupations of white-owned farms.

c. Diplomats leave Harare empty-handed: Several diplomatic missions from organisations such as the European Union (EU), the Commonwealth, the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and Nigeria have come and gone from Harare empty-handed, it was reported, Jan 24.

So were attempts by Zimbabwe's civic bodies such as the Crisis Group, the National Constitutional Assembly, well-meaning churches such as the Roman Catholics and even the so-called National Economic Consultative Forum.

In their own ways, these groups have sought dialogue rather than confrontation to prod President Robert Mugabe to see reason and put his nation first and not to embark on the suicidal path that he has chosen.

UK freezes deportations to Zimbabwe: Britain temporarily halted deportations of asylum-seekers to Zimbabwe, Jan 15, after home secretary David Blunkett called for a review of the situation in the southern African country.

A home office spokesman said nobody had been deported, Jan 14, and the ban would remain for 24 hours while an assessment was carried out.

Zimbabwe has seen growing unrest in the run-up to a presidential election in March. Government-backed militants beat and critically injured several opposition activists over the weekend and burned down an opposition party office.

President Robert Mugabe also is backing a Bill that would ban foreign journalists from working in the country and require local journalists to register with the government or face up to two years in jail.

In Britain, opposition politicians and refugees groups have asked the government to stop deporting Zimbabwean asylum seekers. Some are opposition activists who say they face the possibility of being killed or tortured by Mugabe's secret police.

"There is a real possibility that this will save lives," said Nick Hardwick, chief executive of the Refugee Council. "In the short term we hope the home office will listen to experts when updating their country assessment."

In the longer term we urge the home office to establish an independent body to produce country assessments so that this situation does not arise again."

Conservative Party foreign-affairs spokesman Oliver Letwin said the suspension of deportations was "a victory for commonsense".

Prime Minister Tony Blair's official spokesman said an updated country assessment of the situation in Zimbabwe would be issued to immigration officials shortly.

"We do have concerns in relation to the position there and that is obviously being monitored very closely," the spokesman said.

Hunt for foreign journalists: The Zimbabwean government hunted, Jan 21, for foreign journalists believed to have entered the country on tourist visas, a government-controlled newspaper reported.

Meanwhile, the country's Parliament was scheduled to debate a harsh media Bill that freepress groups said would destroy Zimbabwe's independent media. Under current media regulations, all foreign journalists need to be accredited by the government before entering the violence-wracked country.

When those regulations were adopted in 2001, local officials said the accreditation process would simply be a formality. But Zimbabwe has refused nearly all applications from foreign journalists in recent months.

The Herald newspaper, a government mouthpiece, reported, Jan 21, that several foreign reporters had entered the country on tourist visas in recent days, violating Zimbabwean law.

The journalists, from British and South African publications, were staying in local hotels or in "safe houses" run by the opposition Movement for Democratic Change, the newspaper reported.

The government planned to round up those journalists, said George Charamba, a government spokesman, according to the newspaper.

"Our net is closing in on them, and we should be able to account for all of them before the close of the day," he said.

d. 100 tourism firms close: A hundred companies in Zimbabwe's tourism sector closed down in 2001.

More firms are expected to close down in 2002 because of low tourist arrivals and the country's economic meltdown, officials said, Jan 24.

"About a hundred companies closed down their operations last year (in 2001) alone and we are talking about both registered and unregistered operators here," a senior tourism official told the *Financial Gazette*.

Other industry officials said smaller firms that were not registered with the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority (ZTA) were the most affected by the country's economic crisis and were more likely to have gone under without the ZTA being aware of it.

It was not possible to get statistics from the ZTA on the number of company closures because the organisation had not responded to written questions sent to it recently.

(SOURCE: *Independent*, Harare, *Hindu*, Madras and *Asian Age*, New Delhi)

[Background Info. Zimbabwe, page. 635:a]

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ALGERIA

a. Islamic group chief killed: The head of the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), one of two main extremist groups in Algeria's brutal civil war, has been killed by security forces near the capital Algiers, official forces said, Feb 9.

Antar Zouabri, who led the GIA since 1996, was killed, Feb 8, along with two other members of the GIA in a house in the town of Boufarik, 35 km south of Algiers, the sources said.

Zouabri's body was formally identified by security forces, who said they found weapons and "subversive documents" in the house. The GIA, along with the hardline Group for Salafist Preaching and Combat (GSPC), is blamed for frequent and violent atrocities against Algeria's civilian population, in a decade of violence which claimed an estimated 150,000 lives.

The two groups rejected an offer of amnesty put forward in 1999 by the President, Abdelaziz Bouteflika, as part of a national reconciliation programme.

Islamic insurgents kill 22: Islamic insurgents attacked a village home, killing 13 members of a family west of Algiers, it was reported, Feb 5. Another armed group killed nine people at a roadblock in the same region.

The killings, Feb 4, near Sidi Lakhdar, some 120 km west of the capital, came two days after armed men killed 11 people at a roadblock south of Algiers. Attackers used explosives to blast their way into a home in the village of Sidi Ammar, near Sidi Lakhdar, then shot and knifed to death the family, at least one of whose members belong to a government-armed civilian defence force.

Civilians taking up arms to help security forces in their battle against insurgents are often targeted. The agency did not specify how many children were among the victims in either attack. On Feb 2, 11 people were killed and nine wounded at a roadblock in the Medea region, about 90 km south of Algiers.

b. Amnesty International blames govt for human rights crisis: The authorities have failed woefully to bring an end to the human rights crisis in the country, Amnesty International said, Feb 8.

"Since 1992, despite Algeria's obligations under domestic law and international human rights standards, successive governments have not only failed to take the necessary measures to ensure that thorough, independent and impartial investigations are carried out into grave human rights abuses, they have repeatedly blocked the attempts of others to scrutinize the human rights situation in the country," the organization said.

The blanket of impunity for human rights abuses has allowed many of those responsible for the most appalling crimes to

escape justice and has denied the victims and their families the opportunity to seek redress.

Human rights violations in Algeria have become institutionalized. In 2001 alone, more than 80 civilians were unlawfully killed by the security forces and dozens more tortured or held for varying periods of time in secret detention. Some 200 people continue to die every month as a result of the continuing decade-long armed conflict. The level of killing has remained largely unchanged since early 1999. Many are civilians, including women and children, killed in targeted and indiscriminate attacks by armed groups.

c. Medical relief sent to Lagos blast victims: The Algerian government has donated 10 tons of medical relief to the Nigerian government for onward delivery to victims of the blast in Lagos, it was reported, Feb 4.

The relief materials which came aboard Khalife Airways were handed over to Prof. Alphonsus Nwosu, minister of health by the Algerian minister of labour, Prof. Abdul Mumoun, at Murtala Mohammed Airport, Ikeja.

Presenting the materials, Prof. Mumoun stated that he was in the country to sympathise with the Nigerian government over the unfortunate incident. He added that the team brought with them about nine to 10 tons of medical supplies which constitute what is needed mainly in such situation," he stated.

(SOURCE: *Le Matin*, Algiers, *Asian Age*, New Delhi and *Hindu*, New Delhi)

BOTSWANA

a. Govt to cut services to Kalahari Basarwa: The government confirmed, Jan 29, that it would implement a decision to cut off services to Basarwa (Bushmen) in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR) at the end of January.

Permanent secretary in the ministry of local government Bergsman Sentle confirmed that the decision, made in August 2001, would be implemented. The government was, however, considering a programme suggested by the European Union (EU) which would involve the Basarwa in tourism-related community development in the CKGR and adjacent areas.

"Our (the EU) head of delegation met with local government minister Margaret Nasha, under whose portfolio the matter falls," EU spokesman Ernest Gunnar Ring said recently.

"She explained that the government is not intending to leave the Basarwa in the CKGR, but that it would let them make use of the natural resources of the area within well-determined community use zones." The policy had not yet been fully endorsed by government.

Rights groups protest against relocation of Khoisan:

Human rights activists in Botswana are protesting against the termination of basic services to the remaining Basarwa (Khoisan) in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR), to force them into a relocation camp hundreds of kilometres away, it was reported, Feb 4.

The Botswana government said recently that it would cut off water and other basic social services from January 31, saying that it was too expensive to continue providing them for the remaining 600-700 Basarwa people.

"The termination of services by the government effectively forces people out of the reserve, as they will have no access to basic resources," the Botswana Centre for Human Rights, Ditshwanelo, said in a press release. It added that the government's move was "wrongful and unlawful" and that "it was a deliberate attempt by the government to force the residents out of the reserve".

b. Fight against HIV/AIDS: "The future of humanity is seriously threatened" by the AIDS pandemic, Botswana health minister Joy Phumaphi told an audience at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington, DC, Jan 31.

She was speaking at a symposium designed to showcase the potential of partnership between the public sector and private corporations in fighting the disease. The panel featured public health officials, health foundation representatives, speakers from Merck and Bristol Myers Squibb, the pharmaceutical companies and Jendayi Frazer of the National Security Council.

Strong public-private partnerships such as those taking shape in Botswana are key to successfully fighting HIV/AIDS, minister Phumaphi said.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BURKINA FASO

a. Amnesty calls for investigation into killings: The human rights watchdog, Amnesty International (AI), has called on the government of Burkina Faso to investigate allegations that security forces, in a crackdown against increasing insecurity, have committed extra-judicial killings, it was reported, Feb 7.

AI said the government "should immediately investigate" reports that, in the past three months, 106 extrajudicial killings have taken place. According to AI, the bodies, which the government says are those of bandits, have been found throughout the country, including the capital, Ouagadougou.

AI said the Burkinabe authorities should carry out an "exhaustive, impartial and independent" inquiry in order to determine those responsible and if excessive force was used against presumed criminals. Burkina Faso's security minister, Djibril Bassole, acknowledged, Feb 6, that security forces had killed scores of armed robbers in recent months during an anti-banditry campaign launched in 2001, but defended the forces by saying that they "have no option but to respond accordingly" in dealing with armed gangs.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BURUNDI

a. 24 refugees killed: Over the past three weeks, unknown assailants have killed 24 Burundian refugees in Tanzania's Kibondo district in what one official described as attacks aimed at discouraging voluntary repatriations to Burundi, it was reported, Jan 31.

The governor of the Ruyigi province in eastern Burundi, Isaac Bujaba, confirmed, Jan 31, that the victims were killed in two series of attacks. He said seven people died in the first attacks - between 14 and 19 January. Bujaba said a survivor managed to escape to Ruyigi, which borders on Tanzania.

Seventeen more were killed, Jan 24, including five children and five women, two of whom were pregnant, according to Bujaba. "The only survivor of this carnage is a young man who is residing now in this province," he said. He said investigations were under way to establish the cause of the violence. However, another Burundian state official said that "these attacks are meant to discourage the voluntary repatriation process under way" in Tanzania.

(SOURCE: *New Vision*, Kampala)

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

a. OAU asks UN to redeploy peacekeepers: The Organisation of African Unity (OAU) has asked the UN Security Council to redeploy a peacekeeping force to help consolidate peace in the Central African Republic (CAR), it was reported, Feb 1.

The request followed a two-day OAU extraordinary meeting that ended, Jan 30, in Libya. The OAU said the failed coup of May 2001 vindicated the fears expressed in the previous year, by the chairman of the UN Permanent Consultative Committee on Security Matters in Central Africa, about the withdrawal of the UN Mission in the CAR, MINURCA.

The UN Peace-building Office in CAR, BONUCA, replaced the peacekeeping mission in February 2000. Despite the present calm in the CAR, the OAU added, the situation remained precarious. Successive crises there had resulted in the deepening of divisions, the OAU stated. Therefore, it added, an in-depth dialogue between all the actors was necessary.

[Background Info. Central African Republic, page 627:c]

b. Prime Minister launches national disarmament campaign: Prime Minister Martin Ziguele of the Central African Republic has launched a national disarmament and arms collection programme, a vital step towards curbing the threat small arms pose to peace and security, it was reported, Feb 11.

Gen Lamine Cisse, representative of the UN Secretary-General, and other speakers at the recent launch in Bangui, the country's capital, underscored the importance of disarmament for restoring peace and security, to encourage refugees to return home, attract foreign investment and promote human develop-

ment. Gen. Cisse is head of the UN Peace-Building Support Office in the Central African Republic (BONUCA).

Since 1996, the country has been torn by several army mutinies and attempted coups, unrest that has driven 80,000 people from their homes. About 1,000 soldiers and 20,000 civilians are still in exile in neighbouring countries.

In the aftermath of these upheavals, several groups and a number of individuals in and around Bangui still illegally possess arms. Small arms are also filtering into remote areas as a result of insurrections in neighbouring countries.

c. WFP extends emergency operation for DRC refugees: The UN World Food Programme (WFP) announced, Feb 8, that its emergency operation for refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in the Central African Republic has been extended to April 15, 2002.

Following a joint food-needs assessment conducted between December 2001 and January 2002, WFP and the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees agreed to continue providing over 5,000 refugees with food aid. Of these, 2,800 are settled in a camp where they are receiving full rations.

The remaining refugees reside in the capital, Bangui. While most of those in Bangui are considered to be largely self-sufficient, the assessment mission suggested that 35 per cent of them be given a partial ration to supplement their limited coping capacity, bringing the total caseload to 5,030.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

CONGO (DR)

a. ICRC reunites 31 children with parents: The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has reunited 31 children with their parents in war-torn Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), it was reported, Feb 11.

"One of the most painful aspects in humanitarian terms of any conflict situation is the separation of family members," the ICRC said in a statement issued at the weekend.

A total of 25 children were flown from Goma, eastern DRC, to the capital, Kinshasa, and six others from Kinshasa to Goma, an ICRC spokesman, Florian Westphal said, Feb 11. The children had been separated due to fighting in the country's ongoing war, he confirmed.

The transfers were delayed due to the eruption of Mt Nyiragongo on January 17, Westphal said. Some of the children who had been sheltering in homes and orphanages in Goma prior to being transferred had fled when the eruption occurred. Many of these had to be relocated after the eruption, he confirmed.

b. Belgium apologises for Lumumba killing: Belgian foreign minister Louis Michel has expressed "sincere regrets" on behalf of his government for Belgium's role in the killing in 1961 of then Congolese leader, Patrice Lumumba.

"The government feels it is pertinent and right to present to the family of Patrice Lumumba... and the Congolese people its profound and sincerest regrets," Michel said, Feb 5, during a parliamentary debate on the findings of an inquiry into Lumumba's death, completed in November 2001, and which found Belgium to be "morally responsible".

"Certain members of government... and certain Belgian officials of that time carry an irrefutable part of the responsibility in the events that led to the death of Patrice Lumumba," Michel said.

"The general attitude of neutrality and apathy for the fate of Patrice Lumumba could be qualified as a serious lack of good management and respect for the rule of law," he added.

c. OAU donates US \$100,000 to alleviate plights of volcano-stricken people: The Assistant Secretary General of the Organization of African Unity in charge of Political Affairs, Ambassador Said Djinnit, handed over a cheque for the sum of US\$ 100,000 to the UNHCR as OAU's contribution to help victims of the recent volcanic eruption of Mount Nyiragongo, it was reported, Feb 1.

Ambassador Djinnit stated that the contribution was to assist the affected population and to support the efforts of the international community, as well as a reflection of the partnership between the OAU and the UNHCR. In this regard, he appealed to OAU member states and the wider international community to extend urgently required humanitarian and other forms of assistance to all those affected by the catastrophe, according to an OAU press release.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

EGYPT

a. Arabs angry over Israeli action: Anger is mounting in the Arab world over Israel's actions against the Palestinians, Egypt's foreign minister Ahmed Maher warned, Feb 9.

"There is a growing anger in the Arab world against the Israeli actions, a fact which (Israeli Prime Minister Ariel) Sharon should take good notice of," Maher said in an interview on French television news channel LCI.

Maher, accompanying Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on a trip of Paris, said Israel "cannot continue to wage this clandestine undeclared war, but every day we see the effects on the Palestinian people".

Maher said Europe could do more "and could do better". "I think we need to join our efforts in a bid to convince the United States of the need to take a more balanced position in regard to the Middle East," he added.

b. Trial of human rights defenders threatens freedom of expression: The trial of Saad Eddin Ibrahim and three other human rights defenders is a blatant attempt by the Egyptian authorities to stifle freedom of expression, Amnesty International said, Feb 5

"The charges on which Saad Eddin Ibrahim and the other human rights defenders were convicted and imprisoned in May 2001 are a pretext to punish them for criticizing government policies. They should be immediately and unconditionally released," Amnesty International said. The organization has sent a delegate to Cairo to attend the appeal session of the Court of Cassation.

(SOURCE: *Deccan Herald*, Bangalore and *Hindu*, Madras)

ERITREA

a. Denmark to stop aid: The Danish government is to stop development assistance to Eritrea because of its "assaults on democratic principles and human rights", it was reported, Feb 1.

The move is part of a new Danish policy aimed at reviewing its assistance to developing countries. "The government wishes to break with the habitual thinking of years which dictates that if only assistance increases, everything will be good," an official Danish government report said. The report, issued in January, summarises the government's review of development and environmental assistance to developing countries. It said assistance would be "reorientated" to promote sustainable development through "poverty-oriented economic growth".

"Together with its EU partners, Denmark will make demands regarding good governance and the willingness to increase respect for human rights and democracy in development cooperation," the document said. In Eritrea's case, bilateral programme cooperation would end in 2005, starting with a "radical reduction" in 2002. Informed sources said that direct bilateral aid, which amounted to US \$12 million per year, would be slashed to about US \$7 million with effect from 2002, before stopping altogether in 2005. But, the sources said, this did not affect humanitarian assistance.

(SOURCE: *Monitor*, Kampala)

ETHIOPIA

a. Thousands greet return of stolen artefact: Hundreds of thousands of Ethiopians celebrated the return of a sacred artefact, Feb 9, which was looted by British troops 134 years ago.

Thousands lined the streets as the 400 year-old tabot - a representation of the Ark of the Covenant - was taken to Addis Ababa's Trinity Church where the relic will be stored. It is one of the few items returned by the British after the Battle of Magdala in 1868 - treasure which is now said to be worth US \$4.2 billion.

In 1868 British troops stormed and pillaged the-then capital of Abyssinia during a mission to secure the release of two British envoys being held captive by Emperor Tewodros. The emperor shot himself rather than face defeat.

Ethiopian ministers, diplomats and religious leaders joined the crowds to welcome back the tabot which was found in the cupboard of a church in Scotland in December. The Reverend John McLuckie, who found the tabot in St John's Episcopal Church in Scotland, decided to hand the carved relic back.

b. Court fines editor for "contempt": The Federal Supreme Court, Jan 31, ruled that Amare Aregawi, editor-in-chief of the Amharic private weekly *The Reporter* be fined 500 Birr as penalty as it said "it has found him guilty of charges of contempt of court."

The court also said in its charges against Amare, that his newspaper's reporting "jeopardized the credibility of the court among the public."

The charge was contested by one of the five judges sitting at the hearing. Reading out to the court his reasons for differing in opinion, Justice Tegene Getaneh said the charge should not have been "contempt of court" although the reporting of the newspaper was inaccurate, he said.

Making such charges, he said, would have negative implications on "the budding practice of court reporting" which the private press is now getting engaged in. He also said that he feared that it would send chills down the spines of these private media reporters when they see such a grave charge as "contempt of court" made by the highest judicial body in the country.

c. Government dismisses calls for sea outlet: The Ethiopian government has dismissed calls by an opposition party for an outlet to the sea via the Eritrean ports, it was reported, Feb 11.

About 3,000 supporters of the Ethiopian Democratic Party (EDP) held a rally in Addis Ababa, Feb 10, demanding access to the sea as part of the awaited boundary commission ruling on the border between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

The demonstrators said the country would never have lasting peace without access to the Red Sea. The EDP also demanded that the United Nations allow Ethiopians to hold a referendum on the boundary before a final decision is made.

Lidetu Ayalew, the EDP general-secretary, said the new border would be "unjust and will not bring a genuine and lasting peace".

The international Boundary Commission at The Hague is expected to announce its decision later as part of the Algiers peace agreement signed between the two countries in December 2000 after a two-year border war. Both Eritrea and Ethiopia have agreed to respect the results of the commission which are final and binding.

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

GABON

a. Ebola fever claims 54 lives: The World Health Organisation (WHO) has said that as of February 5, a total of 69 cases of the Ebola virus were confirmed in the Republic of the Congo (RoC) and Gabon.

By Feb 1, 20 confirmed cases, including 12 deaths, had been reported in the RoC, and by February 5, 49 cases, including 42 deaths, had been confirmed in Gabon, WHO said in its update, Feb 7.

"This increase in confirmed cases largely results from a reclassification of suspect cases following the availability of laboratory results," WHO said in a statement issued on February 7. Meanwhile, Feb 7, Associated Press reported the death of a child in the remote northeastern district of ROC, reportedly from Ebola.

Local officials were waiting for laboratory confirmation that six other deaths which had occurred the previous week in the neighbouring district of Kelle, had also been caused by the virus, the agency stated.

EU gives US \$260,370 to fight Ebola: The European Union has donated 300,000 euros (US \$260,370) for the fight against Ebola in northeastern Gabon, an official at the European Commission's office in Libreville said, Feb 6.

He said the medical charity Medecins Sans Frontieres-Belgique would use the money to care for Ebola patients, train local staff in disease protection methods and help the government take effective quarantine measures.

The current Ebola outbreak began in December 2001. It has affected mainly the Mekambo area, 600 km east of Libreville, and districts across the border in neighbouring Republic of Congo.

The World Health Organization said that up to January 20, the Gabonese government had reported 26 confirmed cases of Ebola, including 23 deaths; while 16 confirmed cases, including 11 deaths, had been reported in the Republic of Congo.

Ebola is a haemorrhagic fever transmitted through direct contact with body fluids of infected persons. There is no cure and between 50 per cent and 90 per cent of victims die.

[Background Info. Gabon, page 641:a]

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

GAMBIA

a. 376 pilgrims airlifted to Saudi Arabia: The first batch of three hundred and seventy-six pilgrims were airlifted from the Banjul International Airport, Feb 4, to Saudi Arabia to perform the Haj in the Holy land.

The batch was a combination of the first, second and third flights, delayed for some reasons, Feb 6.

However, according to Haj officials, another batch of 123 pilgrims was scheduled to leave for Mecca, February 5 and the last batch is expected to leave, Feb 7, at a time to be determined and would consist of 219 pilgrims.

Speaking shortly before departure, the secretary of state for the interior and religious affairs, Ousman Badjie, said: "The delay was due to a problem of landing space at Giddah International Airport", insisting that it was not a problem for The Gambia alone but for many other countries around the globe.

He advised the pilgrims to perform the Haj in accordance with the laws of Islam and assured them of government's continued support while they are in Mecca.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

GHANA

a. Ready market in US and Japan for Cocoa bean shells: The shell of cocoa beans, which the Cocoa Processing Company (CPC) discarded as a waste product in the past, has now got ready market in the United States and Japan, where it is used for mulching on farms, it was reported, Feb 1.

Locally some women and four major organisations are also using the shells in the production of soap - "Alata samina".

Since the discovery of its potential the CPC had since 1995 been exporting it on a small scale to earn hard currency. The CPC was disposing of the shells at a far away dumping site from where some enterprising women went to collect to produce "Alata samina" to sell to supplement their domestic income.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Ghana, page 435:a]

GUINEA BISSAU

a. Watchdog says rights defenders are being harassed: Defenders of human rights and political opponents in Guinea Bissau are facing "a sustained clamp-down" on peaceful opposition and criticism of government policy, Amnesty International (AI) reported, Feb 4.

Victims of the latest wave of government harassment, AI reported, include the founder and former president of the Guinea-Bissau Human Rights League, Fernando Gomes, and the league's vice president, Joao Vaz Mane.

Amnesty said they were arrested and accused of misappropriating funds donated to the league but neither the foreign donor nor the league had complained about them. "There seems to be no evidence of wrongdoing," Amnesty reported. Gomes, who also leads the opposition Alianca Socialista da Guine (Socialist Alliance of Guinea-Bissau), was arrested, Feb 2, and is being held at the main police station in Bissau. Mane was arrested, Jan 20, but was released on bail, Feb 1.

Amnesty said that in more recent developments related to freedom of expression and the media, the director of a local NGO, Ajuda e Desenvolvimento (Aid and Development), and the owner and director of the private Radio Bombolom appeared before the prosecutor general, Feb 4, to answer questions related to the status of a community radio, Voz de Quelele, and Radio Bombolom. Voz de Quelele is sponsored by Ajuda e Desenvolvimento.

Government releases opposition leader: Guinea Bissau's authorities, Feb 8, released the head of the opposition Socialist Alliance of Guinea-Bissau, Fernando Gomes, detained since Feb 2.

Gomes, who was detained after being accused by the government of misappropriating a donation of 50,000 euros (about US \$44,000) while he headed the country's human rights league, was released on bail, the Portuguese news agency, Lusa, reported.

Lusa reported the government as saying that there was "clear evidence" of embezzlement, whereas Gomes's party said the matter was a "product of political persecution".

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

KENYA

a. 3,000 guns surrendered in north-east: More than 3,000 firearms and 6,000 rounds of ammunition have been recovered in Kenya's North-Eastern Province in the past ten months, it was reported, Feb 8.

Area Provincial Commissioner, Mohammad Saleh said, Feb 7, security has consequently improved in the region with reduced cases of reported armed banditry attacks. The Provincial Administration had reverted to traditional ways of handling cases of communal clashes.

Saleh said various communities had embraced the new method because the conflicts can be traced to their traditional ways of life among various communities in the region.

He was speaking to reporters after conducting the official opening ceremony of a three-month Advanced Public Administration course at the Kenya Institute of Administration, in Nairobi.

b. Over 1,000 'illegal' immigrants netted in police swoop: More than 1,000 illegal immigrants have been arrested as part of a countrywide crackdown on crime, it was reported, Feb 8.

Police said some of the foreigners were involved in violent crime, drug trafficking and money laundering. They could be deported or taken to court to be charged with criminal offences, a senior police source said. Most of them have been working in Kenya without permits.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

LESOTHO

a. Tsekoa presents budget: Lesotho's Minister of Finance and of Development Planning, Mohlabi Tsekoa, Jan 25, presented the M3.5 billion national budget for 2002-2003 to the National Assembly which saw the ministry of education and manpower development 'getting the biggest slice of the cake at M777.2 million.

He pointed out that the ministry of education was allocated a bigger share in line with the Lesotho government's policy on human resources development.

The allocation forms 22 per cent of the country's total budget and exceeds the money allocated to the ministry during 2001-2002 fiscal year by M135.6 million.

"Of the increase, M47.5 million or 35 per cent will be directly related to free primary education," Tsekoa added. The semi-autonomous National University of Lesotho got a subvention of a staggering M111.6 million.

The second largest share of M324.9 million went to the ministry of public works to "build and maintain economic

infrastructure and to create employment in order to enhance success in the fight against poverty and in creating a better life for all." Health, defence and agriculture got M289.7, M178million and M168.6 million, respectively.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

LIBERIA

a. Emergency declared: Liberia's President Charles Taylor declared a state of emergency throughout the country, Feb 8.

Refugees continued to crowd into Monrovia from Kley junction, just 35 km from the city, where rebels struck in the closest attack to the seat of government since they began Liberia's latest war in mid-2000. The conflict has set tens of thousands on the move, with memories of the savage seven-years civil war in the 1990s that left up to 200,000 dead.

"We don't know the whereabouts of thousands of people because we either don't have access or because we can't go there due to the security situation", said Ramin Rafirasme, regional spokesman of the UN World Food Programme.

"In Monrovia the situation is tense. After years of war it doesn't take much for people to start taking their meagre possessions and move. We are extremely concerned about those displaced people," he said. The government said its forces had driven rebels from Kley. But rebels of Liberian United for Reconciliation and Democracy said in Abidjan by telephone they still held Kley and would reach Monrovia within a week if Taylor refused to step down.

On both sides are fighters from the last civil war, which ended in 1997 with the election of Taylor, a suave US educated former warlord.

(SOURCE: *Asian Age*, New Delhi)

MALAGASY

a. Mass protests in capital: More than half a million supporters of Malagasy opposition leader Marc Ravalomanana converged on the capital's central square again, Feb 6, to press claims that he won the December 2001 presidential vote outright.

And as Ravalomanana, who is also the capital's mayor, called for the allegedly rigged results of the election to be annulled, it emerged that a general strike, now in its second week, was costing the country up to 14 million dollars a day.

The demonstration, Feb 6, came a day after the mayor's supporters brought the capital to a standstill in a so-called "dead city" or "ghost town" protest. Ravalomanana insists he won 52 per cent of votes cast on December 16, 2001. The High Constitutional Court earlier ruled that he won just over 46 per cent and that he must face President Didier Ratsiraka in a second round run-off. As numerous processions converged on the May 13 Square, the general strike entered its 10th day.

Church offers mediation as protests intensify: The influential Council of Churches has offered to mediate between government and opposition leaders to resolve a presidential

election dispute which has led to weeks of massive protests and a crippling, indefinite national strike. The strike, which entered its third day, Jan 30, was called by Marc Ravalomanana, a leading businessman and mayor of the capital Antananarivo. He was one of six presidential candidates who went to the polls on December 16. Ravalomanana and President Didier Ratsiraka, who has been in power for the better part of 25 years since 1975, won just under 50 per cent each of the votes, according to official results confirmed by the High Constitutional Court recently.

However, Ravalomanana has led his supporters in demonstration for more than three weeks, claiming to have won an outright majority, making a run-off unnecessary. Opposition parties have alleged that the election was rigged. The government announced, Jan 27, that the second round of voting would take place on February 24, with campaigning set to begin on February 9.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MALAWI

a. UK urges Anti-Corruption Bureau to probe maize scam: Britain has blamed the current food shortage in Malawi on the mismanagement of national food reserves and urged the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) to fully investigate the maize scam.

Britain, which pledged K100 million for food relief said, Feb 7, in a statement that the mismanagement of reserves in the 2001 season has created the current crisis.

"Britain and other donors have expressed concern about the management of national food reserves. The concern centres on Admarc's use of National Food Reserve Agency (NFRA) supplies, the sale of which may not have been adequately accounted for," said the British government through its High Commission in Lilongwe, Feb 7. The British added that they are looking forward to learning the Bureau's conclusions on that.

The maize scam, implicated some senior citizens because of buying maize from NFRA and selling at unaffordable prices.

b. Government hits back at Denmark: The Government has hit back at the Danish government for cutting aid to Malawi, it was reported, Feb 7.

The Danes, who announced the aid freeze two weeks ago after their finance minister presented his budget to parliament, cited corruption, political intolerance and judicial interference as reasons for their decision.

Reacting to the charge of political intolerance, the ministry of information said in a statement, Feb 6: "This accusation is most tenuous. Fewer countries on earth have more press freedom than Malawi. ...There is not a single political prisoner in Malawi today and no one is in custody who should not be there. Recent reports from Amnesty International will show that the Malawi Government record on human rights is far better than most countries."

The government denied accusations of corruption as serious enough to warrant any aid cut saying that there are other countries that are worse than Malawi.

c. HIV/AIDS kills 7,500 teachers annually: About 7,500 Malawian teachers die of HIV/AIDS related illness each year, straining government resources to train replacements, it was reported, Feb 4.

The country's education ministry is the largest employer in the civil service but loses 6% to 8% of its 60,000 employees to AIDS each year, said the ministry's controller of human resources and development, Aubrey Mvula. Mvula said teachers needed to change their behavior.

"Most teachers resist changing their moral behaviour, but I think it's time to change and talk about it now," he said. The ministry has also come under increasing pressure to incorporate HIV/AIDS education into the school curriculum. Director of secondary education Charles Gunsaru said the curriculum hadn't been revised since 1989.

[Background Info. Malawi, page 593:b]

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MOROCCO

a. Oil deals cause concern: Foreign companies that prospect for oil in Western Sahara would be violating international legal principles relating to non-self-governing territories, *UN News* reported, Feb 6.

The assessment by Legal Counsel Hans Corell, contained in a letter made public at UN headquarters in New York, was in response to a UN Security Council request for an opinion on Morocco's right to sign certain contracts with foreign oil companies with regard to mineral resources in Western Sahara.

Morocco, which annexed most of the former Spanish colony in November 1975, signed deals in 2001 with French oil giant TotalFinaElf and US energy company Kerr-McGee, the *Financial Times* of London reported. However, Corell said the contracts, which dealt with oil reconnaissance and evaluation, did not entail the exploitation or physical removal of the minerals. "The legal counsel concludes that as such the specific contracts dealt with in the Security Council's request were not in themselves illegal," *UN News* reported.

[Background Info. Morocco, page 644:a]

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

NAMIBIA

a. Bandits killed in border shoot-out: At least three suspected UNITA bandits were killed by the Namibia Defence Force (NDF) during a hot pursuit operation, Feb 7.

The Ministry of Defence confirmed the incident, Feb 8.

While the Ministry put the number of UNITA bandits killed at three, a source said NDF soldiers in the Bagani area had told him that several more suspected UNITA bandits were killed.

According to him, the NDF had only been able to transport the bodies of three of them. A ministry statement said the three bandits were killed "in an exchange of fire between the bandits and the NDF during a hot pursuit operation, in [the] bush between Omega and [the] Kongola road."

b. Rapist husband jailed for 10 years: Criminal legal history was made in the Windhoek Regional Court recently with the sentencing of the first man known to be punished under the Combating of Rape Act for raping his wife, it was reported, Jan 31.

The man, whose name was not published in order to protect the identity of his wife, was sentenced to an effective 10 years and three months' imprisonment by Magistrate Gert Retief, Jan 28. He was convicted of rape, kidnapping, assault and defeating or obstructing the course of justice.

(SOURCE: *Namibian*, Windhoek)

RWANDA

a. Genocide suspects working at the tribunal: An association for Rwandan genocide survivors, IBUKA, has claimed that 41 genocide suspects are working as defence investigators at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR).

According to IBUKA, the 41 are based in Arusha, Tanzania, the tribunal's headquarters, it was reported, Feb 11.

IBUKA's claim follows an announcement on January 24, 2002 by the association, together with another non-governmental organization for genocide widows, AVEGA, suspending co-operation with the UN court, citing disillusionment with the functioning of the tribunal. "We cannot resume our co-operation with the tribunal unless these genocide suspects are dismissed," Francois Ngarambe, IBUKA secretary-general, said. However, Gerald Gahima, Rwandan prosecutor-general said, Feb 11, that he does not know about the 41 investigators. He said his office is conducting seven new investigations of defence investigators working at the tribunal.

b. 'Tutsis started killings': A Tutsi attack launched from Uganda was the genesis of the killings in Rwanda in 1994, an expert defence witness told the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), Jan 31.

Professor Pascal Ndengejeho, a former Rwandan minister, was testifying in the genocide trial of ex-mayor Laurent Semanza. He told the court that methods used by Tutsis to kill in the 1960s were exactly the same as those that were used by "RPF and RPA in 1990-1994". "It is clear in the two cases that it is Tutsis who started killing Hutus," the witness claimed during cross-questioning. He began his testimony, Jan 28. The Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), whose military wing was renamed Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA), took power in Rwanda in July 1994, ending the anti-Tutsi genocide which occurred under a Hutu regime.

[Background info. Rwanda, page 574:a]

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

NIGERIA

a. President declares national tragedy: Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo declared a national tragedy, Jan 29, following a series of explosions on January 27 night at a military dump in Lagos left more than 600 dead.

Many among the dead were women and children who drowned in a canal while trying to run away.

In a broadcast aired on local radio stations, Obasanjo said "over 600 bodies have been recovered," including many from the Oke Afa Canal in the northern Isolo neighbourhood. Lagos governor Bola Ahmed Tinubu blamed the deaths on military negligence.

"What happened in Lagos was a monumental tragedy", Obasanjo said, calling the deaths of 600—"mostly women, children and youths"—a "national disaster".

One Nigerian newspaper, *Daily Vanguard*, meanwhile estimated over 2,000 people had been killed, while state television cited unnamed witnesses as saying between 750 and 1,000 bodies had been recovered in the city.

Blast toll mounts to 1,100: The Nigerian Red Cross said, Jan 30, more than 1,100 people remained missing in Lagos three days after a cascade of deadly explosions at a military armoury in the city.

Workers pulled more than 600 bodies from two canals near a weapons dump that burst into flames, Jan 27.

Poorly equipped mortuaries have been stretched to the limit and attendants said they feared decomposing bodies could spark an epidemic in the metropolis of over 10 million people. "We registered a total of 4,000 people reported missing..." Red Cross spokesman Patrick Bawa said.

Bawa said most of the missing were children aged between four and 11. The Red Cross was also looking after 15 children separated from their parents.

President says ammunition fire may be sabotage: President Olusegun Obasanjo has said sabotage could have caused the explosions at an ammunition depot in Lagos.

Confirming the estimated toll of about 1,000 civilians killed, Obasanjo told a TV panel: "It could be negligence, it could be an accident, it could be sabotage, it could be anything," and promised to make the military inquiry public.

Human rights lawyers recently said they suspected saboteurs triggered the blow-up. They made a link with the alleged shifting of military stockpiles from the north, which had dominated power under army rule, to Obasanjo's south western region.

[Background Info. Nigeria, page 642:a]

b. 100 dead in riots: At least 100 people have been killed in four days of ethnic fighting in Lagos and more than 430 have been taken to hospitals in Nigeria's biggest city, it was reported, Feb 6.

"As of now you can say 100 have been confirmed dead. About 430 have been wounded," Nigerian Red Cross president Emmanuel Tjewe said.

In the teeming shantytown of Mushin, the centre of skirmishes between northern Hausas and southwestern Yorubas, soldiers kicked in doors and forced suspected rioters on their knees for interrogation at gunpoint as they hunted those behind the tribal clashes.

Some residents who had fled the violence returned to their homes in Mushin on the outskirts of the city to collect their possessions. Troops ordered them to leave again quickly. Intermittent shots rang out and youths with machetes still walked the streets, darting for cover at the approach of army and police patrols. The stench of rotting and burnt flesh hung in the air, as dozens of charred bodies littered the streets.

Nigerian troops were on alert for revenge attacks in Lagos and the northern city of Kano after the riots wound higher the tensions between ethnic groups in Africa's most populous nation.

Pitted against each other in the ramshackle slum are Nigeria's main tribes and old rivals—Hausas whose origins lie in the mainly Muslim north and Yorubas from the more heavily Christian and animist southwest.

(SOURCE: *Asian Age*, New Delhi, *Indian Express*, New Delhi and *Statesman*, Calcutta)

[Background Info. Nigeria, page 558:a]

SOMALIA

a. Inter-clan fighting leaves 40 dead: About 40 people have been killed and 60 wounded in inter-clan fighting in the Mudug region of central Somalia, sources in the regional capital Galkayo said, Jan 30.

The fighting was concentrated in and around the village of Afbarwaqo, some 200 km east of Galkayo, but has now died down.

According to a local elder, Muhammad Salad Du'ale, the fighting - which broke out two weeks ago - occurred between the Sa'd sub-clan of the main Habar Gedir clan, and the Dir clan. It was sparked off by revenge killings for the deaths of eight fishermen near Afbarwaqo, but the ensuing escalation of the violence was also attributable to the scarcity of water and grazing in the area, Du'ale said. He said neutral elders from Galkayo had managed to secure a ceasefire, to allow for mediation to take place and to stop the fighting from spreading to other villages. "There has been no fighting in the last couple of days," Sheko Harir, said in Galkayo. "The elders have met and talked to both sides, and direct talks between the belligerents are expected to begin soon."

b. Foreign terror suspects freed: The Transitional National Government (TNG) of Somalia has freed 11 foreign nationals who were arrested in December 2001, for suspected links with terrorist groups, it was reported, Feb 6.

Zakariya Mahmud Haji, the TNG information minister, said in December that nine of the men "were of Iraqi nationality", and had been arrested "because we are not sure who they are".

The nine, along with two Eritrean nationals, were arrested on December 18, 2001, on the orders of the anti-terrorist task

force set up by the TNG after the September 11 attacks in New York. They were released, Feb 5, after "a long police investigation found that they had no links with any terrorist organisation", the TNG director of information, Abdirahman Dinari said, Feb 6.

He said the police investigations had found that some of them were in possession of illegal Somali documents, "such as passports, which were confiscated". They were, however, free to stay in the country, added Dinari.

c. Fish dying in large numbers: Dead and dying fish are being washed ashore from Kismayo, 500 km southwest of Mogadishu, to Bosaso, 1,500 km northeast of the Somali capital, it was reported, Jan 31.

"We have seen all types of fish being washed ashore in the last couple of weeks," a humanitarian source in Kismayo said. "We have even seen sharks." In Bosaso, the commercial capital of the self-declared autonomous region of Puntland, northeastern Somalia, and the region's main port, fish are being washed ashore "some of them alive and dying onshore", Muhammad Sa'id Kashawito, a local journalist said. Fish in this condition have also been seen on the beaches of Mogadishu and nearby coastal towns.

There is no clear explanation as to what is killing the fish. According to the humanitarian source in Kismayo, some people are blaming foreign vessels for the phenomenon, accusing them of dumping poisonous waste into Somali waters. Others say the fish are being dumped by foreign ships illegally fishing in Somali waters.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SOUTH AFRICA

a. Court orders eviction of Winnie: Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, a veteran of South Africa's struggle against apartheid who enjoys a lavish lifestyle, is in controversy yet again, says a report, Feb 9.

A court has ordered her eviction from the Soweto house she once shared with her ex-husband, South Africa's first Black President Nelson Mandela. A leading bank has obtained a court order to repossess her luxury Mercedes-Benz limousine for which she still owes nearly 50,000 rand (4,300 dollars).

Bulldozers recently moved in on her business premises in the sprawling township where, it was reported, she had breached municipal bylaws when she erected the tavern club and shop. A case of theft and fraud involving the use of her signature for bank loans worth in excess of one million rand is pending following her arrest in 2001.

Parliament's ethics committee is also pursuing Winnie, a ruling African National Congress MP and the president of its Women's League, for failing to disclose her business interests. But, the 66-year-old politician who for decades received wide support as apartheid South Africa's most popular female resistance figure, remains as defiant as ever.

"No one is taking my house. Anyone who says that is insane. I didn't defeat the Boers for nothing," she told reporters recently.

She is contesting the court ruling intended to make the house, which she turned into a museum in April 1997, the property of the Soweto Heritage Foundation, according to her lawyers. The Winnie Mandela and Family Museum as the house in Orlando West is known, is a popular tourist attraction where visitors can walk away with a good idea of the Mandela clan's struggle against apartheid and a few grains of bottled soil.

[Background Info. South Africa, page 561:b]

b. Man kills 11 over row with girlfriend: A South African man shot dead 11 people before killing himself, Feb 10, after a row with his girlfriend, the South African Press Association reported.

Seven people were also in a critical condition in hospital after the shooting rampage in a township in the city of East London. The suspect had first shot dead his girlfriend after a row, Feb 9.

He then went to the home of his girlfriend's relatives where three people were killed. The man then indiscriminately shot seven members of the public after driving away from the house in his car.

c. 22 die in train mishap: Twenty-two people were killed, 16 of them school children, when a packed passenger train crashed into a stationary freight train in eastern South Africa, police said, Feb 6.

The crash occurred at Charlotte's Dale, some 70 km (42 miles) north of the Indian Ocean port city of Durban, Feb 5. "At the moment the death toll has risen to 22, we had 16 school children who died in the accident and six adults," a police spokesman told the South African Broadcasting Corporation.

(SOURCE: *Deccan Herald*, Bangalore and *Telegraph*, Calcutta)

SUDAN

a. Blair announces plans for special envoy: British Prime Minister Tony Blair, Feb 7, said he plans to appoint a special envoy to Sudan to assist in efforts to bring an end to the country's 19-year civil war.

"I want to announce today (Feb 7) that I intend to appoint a special envoy to work with others in the search for peace," Blair said in an address to the Nigerian parliament in the federal capital, Abuja, during the first leg of his West African tour. Blair is also due to visit Sierra Leone, Ghana and Senegal.

Blair said that although the UK, along with other nations, continued to provide humanitarian aid to Sudan, this was "no substitute for a lasting peace". Sudan had been mired in conflict for all but 10 years since it gained independence from Britain and Egypt in 1956, he added. Blair's call for peace in Sudan is part of a general call to bring violent conflict throughout Africa to an end. Continuing conflict had held back the continent's development and also posed a threat to global security, he said.

b. Rebel group alleges ceasefire violations in Nuba: The Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) claimed, Feb 6, that government forces had attacked its positions in the Nuba Mountains region of Southern Kordofan, violating

for the second time a ceasefire agreement both parties had signed on Jan 19.

The SPLM/A spokesman, Samson Kwaje said, Feb 7, that he feared the six-month ceasefire deal was in danger of collapsing if the international community failed to apply pressure on the Sudanese government to honour its commitments under the agreement.

"Khartoum has broken it twice in 10 days, first on 23 January and then on 3 February. This means they are not serious with their commitment. There are so many agreements Khartoum has broken. They have never negotiated with us faithfully," Kwaje said.

c. Bashir strengthens anti-abductions body: Sudanese President Umar Hasan al-Bashir has placed under his direct supervision a committee charged with ending abduction of women and children, giving it greater powers and providing it with better access to funding, it was reported, Jan 30.

Bashir, Jan 26, issued a decree transferring the Committee for Eradication of Abduction of Women and Children (CEAWC), formed in 1999 under the justice minister, to his office.

A full time committee chairman would be given "political, legal and executive powers" to arrest, investigate, and prosecute those involved in abductions. Muhammad Ahmad Dirdiery, the charge d'affaires at the Sudanese embassy in Nairobi said, Jan 29, that the CEACW was an internationally approved mechanism for addressing the problem of abductions.

"This is a part of the government of Sudan's promise to see that this issue is addressed within the proposals of [former US] Senator Danforth," Dirdiery said.

An undertaking to end slavery was one of four confidence-building measures proposed by the US special peace envoy to Sudan, John Danforth, during a visit to the country in November 2001. The other three proposals were on humanitarian access to the Nuba Mountains; a cessation of bombing and artillery attacks on civilians; and the creation of zones of tranquillity and times of tranquillity in which humanitarian assistance can be offered.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

TANZANIA

a. Lusaka to get 20,000 tonnes of maize: Tanzania has agreed to export at least 20,000 tonnes of maize to Zambia in the wake of the current critical shortage which has ground operations in some milling firms to a halt, it was reported, Feb 8.

Vice-President, Enoch Kavindele said in Lusaka, Feb 7, that the 20,000 tonnes of maize was expected to arrive from Tanzania in the next few days.

"I spoke to President Benjamin Mkapa this morning and he assured me that he had already approved the export of the maize to Zambia," Kavindele said.

He said the 20,000 tonnes which would be brought into the country by railway would cater for Northern, Luapula, Central and Copperbelt provinces. "We hope with this development the maize will be able to reach the target areas faster unlike in the past when the bulk of the imports would come from South Africa through Zimbabwe," he said.

b. Anti-drug trafficking protocol ratified: Tanzania has ratified the protocol on combating drug trafficking in the East African region, which intends to strengthen security organs at airports, harbours and border entry points, it was reported, Feb 6.

The protocol was ratified in Dar-es-Salaam, Feb 5, by the House and the legislators insisted on the need to harmonize legislation on drugs in the three East African countries so as to ease the enforcement of the anti-drugs trafficking laws.

Presenting the protocol to Parliament in Dodoma region in central Tanzania, Feb 5, the minister for home affairs, Mohamed Seif Khatib, said one article in the East African Treaty was on the fight against manufacture, consumption, and trafficking of narcotic drugs.

He said this called for the ratification of the protocol by all the member states. He did not say whether Kenya and Uganda have already ratified the said protocol, but three member states of the East Africa Community (EAC) are reported to be used as transit routes by drug traffickers.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

UGANDA

a. Defence force kills 20 ADF rebels: A Total of 20 Allied Democratic Force (ADF) rebels of Uganda have been killed and seven others, including two commanders, captured in intensified UPDF operations in the Rwenzori region of the Democratic Republic of Congo, it was reported, Feb 6.

The commander of the Alpine Mountains Brigade, Lt. Col. Dula Mawa, said the UPDF under its "ADF Sick Bay Destruction" operation also recovered 450 bullets, 12 guns, four grenades and one landmine. Mawa was briefing journalists at the 59th battalion headquarters at Kanyabutundu, Bwera town in Hoima district, Feb 2.

He said 12 former fighters of the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU) also reported to the UPDF. Mawa said the captured rebels include two ADF rebel commanders Muhamad Kakooza and Mustafa Swaleh from Kabalagala, Kampala and Galigatya, Mukono district respectively.

(SOURCE: *New Vision*, Kampala)

ZAMBIA

a. Starving family offers child for sale: A poor woman in Zambia has offered to sell her one-year child for \$50 only, says a report, Feb 5.

"You must buy my child. You must raise her. I only ask for 200,000 kwacha (50 dollars) to buy maize meal to feed my family," said Brenda, offering the tiny girl strapped to her back in the copper-rich town, Chibombo. Brenda, a mother of six, said

she had not seen maize in months and would be happy with one less mouth to feed, as well as the cash she needed urgently to sustain her household or its equivalent in maize meal in return for her child. Families in Zambia face a double blow from a failed maize crop in 2001 and the threat of joblessness in the country's key copper sector, a vital source of foreign exchange and employment in the country of 11 million people.

The price of maize meal has soared by as much as 120 per cent since November 2001 to 45,000-55,000 kwacha (11.25-13.75 dollars) per 25 kg (55 lb) bag, pushing it well beyond the means of families like Brenda's that have no steady income.

Zambia's newly elected government is grappling with ways to tackle a large external debt and high inflation, restore investor confidence and fiscal discipline, and at the same time ensure its people have enough to eat. In January, the World Food Programme (WFP) launched an emergency feeding operation for 1.3 million people too poor to afford food who must now rely on relief handouts. The other 700,000 are expected to buy imported maize subsidised by the state, but the imports have not arrived three months after the government pledged to deliver food on the tables of the hungry and proclaimed the worst was over. One in four Zambians is without a job and more than three-quarters live below the World Bank's poverty threshold of one dollar a day.

(SOURCE: *Statesman*, Calcutta)

ZIMBABWE

a. Ministers reject demand for suspension from C'wealth: Commonwealth foreign ministers, Jan 30, rejected British-led calls for Zimbabwe's suspension from the organisation.

The eight-member Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group, the organisation's democracy watchdog, called instead for the immediate deployment of election observers for Zimbabwe's presidential election on March 9 and 10.

"The issue that is on the table at the moment is to ensure that we have free and fair elections", CMAG chairman Mompoti Merafhe, Botswana's foreign minister, told a news conference after the day-long talks in London. The Commonwealth move was a rebuff to Britain's foreign secretary Jack Straw, who has sought Zimbabwe's suspension from the Commonwealth's main decision-making bodies and a recommendation from the ministers for its complete suspension at a March 2-5 Commonwealth summit in Australia.

Commonwealth secretary-general Don McKinnon said engagement, not isolation, was the best course and that cutting Zimbabwe off would have left the international community even fewer levers of influence over Mugabe. "The easiest thing would be to totally disengage and then no one could put any pressure on at all," McKinnon said. "Everyone is calling for suspension. What we do know is that if there had been suspension there would have been no election observers".

British sources said Australia, Canada and Barbados had supported Straw's tough stance but faced resistance from other members.

EU ultimatum to Mugabe: The European Union, Jan 28, gave Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe one last chance to ensure free and fair election. The EU vowed to slap sanctions on the country's ruling elite if he failed to comply by next week. The EU foreign ministers agreed that if Zimbabwe prevented the development of European Union election observers by February 3, a travel ban would be imposed on the top 20 individuals in Mugabe's inner circle and their families.

The foreign assets of these decision-makers would be frozen and a ban would be imposed on the export to Zimbabwe of arms and other equipment which could be used for internal repression.

"The decision which we've taken gives President Mugabe no option but to accept effective international election observers or to face international sanctions," British foreign secretary Jack Straw said. "He has until a week to make up his mind. Either he calls off the thugs, allows the media to operate freely and let the people of Zimbabwe make a democratic choice or he and his key ministers will pay the penalty".

Mugabe, facing his greatest challenge in 22 years, has been accused by the international community of trying to rig the country's March 9-10 presidential election.

Zimbabwean state radio said, Jan 28, that Mugabe had invited EU observers but would not allow in observers from Britain, which he accuses of backing the opposition. European external affairs commissioner Chris Patten said the EU envisaged a team of 150 observers, including a core team which would go out early to prepare the ground, which should have assurances on accreditation, security and access.

"We want to ensure that the job is done properly and that we are not just stooges," he said. Mugabe repeatedly accuses Britain of being behind Zimbabwe's political crisis, which has been driven by a dispute over the takeover of White-owned land.

Newspaper office bombed: A provincial office of Zimbabwe's only private daily newspaper and a company that has been printing opposition election campaign material were attacked with petrol bombs, Feb 11, company officials said.

The attack came amid reports that political violence is rising around the country in the runup to presidential election in March in which President Robert Mugabe faces the toughest challenge that he has ever faced in all of his 22 years in power.

A journalist with *The Daily News* said that two petrol bombs were thrown into the newspaper's offices in the second city of Bulawayo in the early hours. Fortunately, nobody was injured and very little equipment was damaged. "The petrol bombs were thrown through the window into the foyer, and the account that we got from the night guards is that the bombs were thrown from a moving car," the journalist said. The reporter said two petrol bombs were also hurled at the offices of a nearby private printing house, *Daily Print*, which has been handling campaign material for the main opposition Movement for Democratic Change. A police spokesman said that they were investigating the attack.

Journalist arrested: The police arrested a leader of Zimbabwe's journalists' union under the new security laws, his family said, Feb 5.

Basildon Peta, secretary-general of the Zimbabwe Union of Journalists, is believed to be accused of organising an illegal demonstration outside the Harare Parliament on January 30 to protest strict media curbs being debated by lawmakers.

(SOURCE: *Asian Age*, New Delhi)

[Background Info. Zimbabwe, page 647:a]

REGIONAL

a. WB lends \$500 m to fight AIDS: The World Bank has approved no-interest loans of 500 million dollars to fight HIV/AIDS in Africa, where the disease is the leading cause of death, it was reported, Feb 9.

In the past two decades AIDS has claimed more than 18 million lives in Africa, and about 28 million Africans are among the 40 million people now living with HIV worldwide. "Despite promising developments in the past year, the situation is growing worse," the bank said in a statement, Feb 7.

"More than 9,000 Africans are newly infected each day".

The credit brought to 1 billion dollars the total the bank has lent this fiscal year for AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support effort on the continent. "Intensifying the fight against HIV/AIDS is central to the bank's mission," said World Bank president James Wolfensohn, who visited Africa in 2001. The new loans will help fund programmes in 12 to 15 sub-Saharan countries and specifically target the Abidjan-Lagos transport corridor, the Washington-based lending agency said.

High-risk behaviour has been concentrated along the busy transport route, speeding the spread of the disease through the Ivory Coast, Ghana, Togo, Benin and Nigeria, the bank said.

The credit will also support a pilot programme in Senegal to use anti-Retroviral therapy and try to cut HIV transmission among high-risk groups to 3 per cent by 2006. "Working with many partners, we are confident this comprehensive approach can produce visible results in the coming years," said World Bank vice president Callisto Madavo. Since September 2001, a dozen countries have received financial and technical support under the programme. They are Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Malagasy, Nigeria and Uganda.

The World Bank and UNAIDS estimated that 3 billion dollars is needed every year to fund basic prevention, care and treatment of HIV/AIDS across the continent.

(SOURCE: *Deccan Herald*, Bangalore)

African Chronicle

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ALGERIA

a. Suspect in Sept 11 bombing freed on bail:

An Algerian pilot accused of training the suicide hijackers who crashed into the Pentagon on September 11 was granted bail at an extradition hearing by a British court, Feb 17.

Lotif Raissi, 27, who has been held in jail for five months, emerged from the top security Belmarsh Magistrate's Court complex in southeast London to the applause from his family and friends. Although no terrorism charges have yet been brought against him, United States officials said that he was still being investigated as a September 11 suspect. A US embassy spokesman in London said: "He remains the subject of a continuing terrorist investigation".

The statement came as two more British prisoners were moved to the US Camp X-ray detention centre in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Ruhal Ahmed, 20, from Tipton, West Midlands and Jamal Udeen, 35, from Manchester, were transferred from Kandahar, Afghanistan, bringing the number of British Al-Qaeda suspects held there to five.

At a hearing in London, Feb 17, Raissi was told by District Judge Timothy Workman that he could have conditional bail as he was only facing extradition to the US on two counts of falsifying an application for a US pilot's licence. He allegedly hid a 1993 theft conviction and failed to mention that he had undergone a knee operation.

Prosecutors acting for the US have always insisted that those were "holding charges" while they investigated further. At previous court hearings they indicated Raissi was suspected of being a "lead instructor" for the pilots responsible for the September 11 hijackings. They specifically linked him to Hani Hanjour, the pilot suspected of crashing Flight 77 into the Pentagon. Raissi was arrested on September 21, 2001, and held at Belmarsh Prison ever since.

Before leaving court he was told his family would have to give \$10,000 in surety, that he would have to live at an address specified to the court, surrender his passport and not apply for international travel documents. District Judge Workman said he was allowing bail as the US government looked unlikely to bring terrorism charges against Raissi soon.

During the hearing James Lewis, representing the US government, argued against bail. He said, "We are concerned with an investigation into an atrocity that shocked the civilised world. Those responsible for and concerned in the attacks must be brought to justice".

b. Human rights activist sentenced:—Human rights activist Mohamed Smain has been sentenced to one year in prison on charges of defamation, it was reported, Feb 25.

Amnesty International, Feb 25, condemned the verdict. Mohamed Smain, president of the Relizane branch (western Algeria) of the League for the Defence of Human Rights, Ligue Algirienne pour la Defense des Droits de l'Homme (LADDH), was convicted by the Appeal Court of Relizane of defamation against Mohamed "El Hadj" Fergane, a former mayor and local chief of a state-armed militia, and eight of his militia companions.

Mohamed Smain was also ordered to pay a fine of 5,000 dinars (approximately US\$65) and damages of 30,000 dinars (US\$390) to each of the nine plaintiffs. He is currently free but has 10 days to appeal.

Mohamed Fergane and his companions had accused Mohamed Smain of falsely linking them to the abduction, torture, killing and "disappearance" of dozens of citizens in the Wilaya (province) of Relizane and the disposal of bodies of victims in mass graves in the area.

(SOURCE: *Le Matin*, Algiers and *Deccan Herald*, Bangalore)

ANGOLA

a. UNITA leader Savimbi killed in battle: The Angolan government said, Feb 23, UNITA rebel leader Jonas Savimbi was killed, Feb 22, in a battle with Luanda's troops.

The elusive 67-year-old guerilla fighter—who combined charisma and guile to wage a decades-old struggle for power—died in a clash with army troops in Moxico province, the government said.

"The government of the Republic of Angola would like to inform the national and international public of the death of Jonas Malherio Savimbi," it said in a statement.

There was no official reaction from UNITA, but an unofficial UNITA contact in Lisbon, Rui Oliveria said: "We are waiting for our forces in the interior to get in contact with us, only after that we can talk".

State radio said Savimbi's body would be flown to the capital, Feb 23, from Moxico and displayed in public. A senior Angolan intelligence officer said Savimbi was "shot several times" during a battle with government forces. Savimbi and some of his troops had been surrounded by the army since Feb 18, the intelligence officer said, adding that up to two dozen people died in the battle.

A regional military source in Pretoria said that Savimbi actually died earlier in the week but that Luanda had delayed announcing his death to coincide with President Eduardo dos

Santo's visit to the United States, Feb 25. "Of all the reports over the years of Savimbi being killed this one sounds the most credible," the source said.

"Our information is that he actually died early in the week. But the government wanted maximum propaganda out of the killing ahead of the President's visit to Washington next week," the source added. The whereabouts of Savimbi's two most senior aides, vice-president Antonio Dembo and secretary-general Paulo Lukamba Gato remained unknown, fueling speculation they too may have been caught up in the fighting along the Zambian frontier.

News of Savimbi's death was greeted with celebrations in the poorer outlying slums of Luanda, Feb 22, but the capital was quiet, Feb 23, as people waited for fresh announcements from the government or UNITA.

People let off flares and cars and mini buses blew their horns, Feb 22, while military trucks drove past with soldiers in a jubilant mood. "He just wanted war, war, war," one man said. "I think peace will come now because Savimbi was one of the principal figures of the rebellion".

War is not over, says UNITA: President Jose Eduardo dos Santos left, Feb 24, for Portugal and the United States for a State trip during which he is expected to present plans for securing peace in Angola following the death of Savimbi.

However, UNITA members warned they could continue a war against the government which started after Angola's independence from Portugal in 1975. Carlos Morgado, a UNITA representative in Portugal, said the group was "deeply shaken" by the death of Savimbi in a gun battle with the army.

"From now on, the scenario has changed, we'll have to find new paths. But this will never mean a military surrender. There'll be no military victory" of the government, he said on the Portuguese cable news channel SIC Noticias.

The war is believed to have killed about 500,000 people, though there are no confirmed figures. About four million people—roughly one-third of the population—have been driven from their homes by the fighting, creating a humanitarian crisis.

Possible successors to Savimbi are the UNITA vice-president, Antonio Dembo and Savimbi's close aide, Paulo Lukamba Gato. Both are believed to be hiding in the Angolan bush. The army says it is still pursuing rebel units.

UNITA, a Portuguese acronym for the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola, is thought to have several thousand troops in a country with ideal terrain for guerilla warfare. The Portuguese foreign ministry urged the Angolan government to call a ceasefire and that the UNITA should join in negotiations to map out the country's political future.

The United Nations wants the foes to abide by a 1994 peace agreement it brokered. That accord, like two others before it, collapsed in 1998, prompting the UN Security Council to impose sanctions on the rebel group. UNITA has said the 1994 accord was flawed and has refused to enter into talks with the United Nations, accusing the world body of bias toward the government.

dos Santos, who has not spoken in public since Savimbi's death was announced, was to meet the Portuguese foreign minister, Jaime Gama, Feb 24, before travelling to Washington

for a meeting with the US President, George W Bush. Savimbi led UNITA since he founded it in 1966. During the Cold War, he was a proxy for the United States against the then- Marxist government.

Luanda for truce with UNITA: President Jose Eduardo dos Santos said, Feb 26, he wanted to negotiate a ceasefire with the UNITA rebel group as a first step toward disarming the guerillas and ending the civil war.

A UNITA representative said the group would stop fighting and start negotiations only after a unilateral ceasefire by the government. In his first public comments since Jonas Savimbi was killed by the army, he also called for national reconciliation.

"My government is considering taking quick steps to normalise the political situation in Angola, obviously starting by searching for a path that leads us, urgently, to a ceasefire," he said after meeting the Portuguese President, Jorge Sampaio.

"We aim to build bridges so that as soon as possible we can achieve a ceasefire that permits the demilitarisation of UNITA," he said.

b. More than 5,000 IDPs arrive in Luena: Fleeing fighting in the Angolan countryside, more than 5,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) arrived in the eastern city of Luena in January, the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said, Feb 18.

The vast majority of the IDPs were women, children and the elderly.

"The number of internally displaced populations arriving in Luena has continued to increase in recent months as a result of [military] operations in Moxico and other provinces," OCHA said. "The total number of confirmed IDPs in the provincial capital has reached more than 89,000." OCHA added that according to the Moxico provincial government, an estimated 60,000 new IDPs may arrive in Luena between February and June. Moxico has been the scene of a long-running government military offensive against UNITA rebels.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, Madras, *Deccan Herald*, Bangalore and *Asian Age*, New Delhi)

BURKINA FASO

a. Denmark cuts aid over violation of UN sanction: Denmark has reduced aid to Burkina Faso over allegations of violations of a UN arms embargo against Sierra Leone and Angola, and over slow progress in investigations into the death of journalist Norbert Zongo.

Anna Hvidt, head of western and eastern Africa department at the Danish foreign affairs ministry said, Feb 19, the reduction was because of the "two negative factors".

Speaking in the capital Ouagadougou, the Danish official said Burkina Faso had done very little to control arms imports and use, following accusations by a UN weapons panel that the country had violated an embargo against the Sierra Leone Revolutionary United Front rebel group, and UNITA rebels in Angola. An authority set up in 2001 to monitor arms imports and

use had done nothing, she added. Zongo, publisher of a popular weekly, *The Independent*, was found murdered along with three companions in December 1998. He was investigating the death in military custody of a driver of the President's brother. His death sparked a socio-political unrest in the country.

b. Water shortage may affect food harvests: Burkina Faso could face a food shortfall in 2002 because of severe nationwide water shortages, the Food Early Warning System (FEWS) reported, Feb 14.

Two provinces, Oubritenga and Kourweogo in the central plateaux region, are already experiencing water problems, although no major food availability problems have yet been reported in the country since November 2001.

"Farmers in the Centre Plateaux, Centre North, Centre West, North and Sahel regions have begun planting crops. The main concern is whether there will be enough water in dams, seasonal wells, and other catchments to bring these crops to maturity," FEWS said.

"Food security prospects for the next three to five months are likely to remain satisfactory. Nevertheless, in areas characterised by major production shortfalls as well as severe water shortages that prevent off-season crop production, many households may face serious hardship in four to five months, if not earlier," it added.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BURUNDI

a. Acting WHO representative under house arrest: The acting World Health Organisation (WHO) representative in Burundi, Dr Lamine Diarra, is under house arrest, the United Nations Development Programme resident representative, Georg Charpentier, confirmed, Feb 22.

He said Diarra had been placed under house arrest by Burundian police, Feb 21, adding that "we are paying him visits regularly and following the evolution very closely".

"We are also following up with the authorities very closely, although, as yet, they have not informed us why they took this course of action," he added.

The Associated Press reported a WHO spokeswoman, Melinda Henry, as saying from Geneva that "WHO is following this pending investigation and can't comment on it as it is ongoing".

b. Ban lifted on Net Press news agency: Burundian communications minister Albert Mbonerane, Feb 24, lifted curbs on the private news agency Net Press to publish or post news on its website, editor-in-chief Claude Sibomana, said, Feb 25.

"The keys to our office were returned to us on Saturday (Feb 24). We are very grateful to all our colleagues who helped negotiate our reinstatement with the minister," Sibomana said.

The suspension of Net Press was ordered by Mbonerane on January 14, on the grounds that the news agency had not been observing Burundi's media law.

"For some time now, we have noted that Net Press editors and management have not been respecting the media law of March 1997, which stipulates that the media should avoid publishing information that is subversive, defamatory, abusive, false or even lies that are published with the sole aim of disturbing the prevailing situation in the country," Mbonerane told Burundi Radio at the time.

(SOURCE: *New Vision*, Kampala)

EGYPT

a. Over 300 killed as fire sweeps through running train: Fire swept through a crowded midnight train, Feb 20, near Cairo, killing 300 passengers in the deadliest disaster of more than 150-year-old history of Egypt.

People jumped from windows and doors to escape the flames and smoke that engulfed the train as it rolled on for several kilometres before coming to a stop, security sources said.

"We pushed each other and we were suffocating from the smoke. We threw each other out the windows," one survivor said from his hospital bed.

It took firefighters several hours to put out the blaze which raged through seven carriages of the train near the town of al-Ayatt, about 70 km south of the Egyptian capital.

Charred bodies lay trapped in carriages and between the bars of windows. Their bodies were burned beyond recognition.

The official Middle East News Agency (MENA) said 299 people had died and 74 had been injured. It said preliminary investigations showed the fire started when a passenger tried to light a small gas stove.

Egyptians often use portable stoves to brew their tea and coffee on board the train.

A medical official at the site said the toll had risen to 300. Security sources said it was the deadliest disaster in more than 150 years.

One Egyptian rescuer in a bloodied galabiya robe, plastic gloves and sandals on his feet worked his way through one of the compartments in search of survivors, finding nothing but charred limbs and bodies.

The train had been heading south from Cairo to Luxor in the south of the country. Traffic on the track, the only railline between Cairo and Upper Egypt, came to a stop for several hours.

Security sources said all the dead were believed to be Egyptians. Witnesses said the train was overcrowded with people heading for the countryside to spend the Muslim *Id al-Adha* holiday with families. The holiday is the biggest of the Muslim year.

Foreign tourists frequently travel on trains to visit ancient sites in the southern cities of Aswan and Luxor, but tend to use air-conditioned first-class or sleeper trains for security and comfort reasons. The train was an old, slow-moving model used mostly by poor Egyptians.

It stopped at nearly every station because it also was used to carry daily newspapers to towns and villages along the River Nile. Social affairs minister Amina el-Gindy said the government would pay 3,000 Egyptian pounds (\$650) in emergency assistance to the families of the dead, and \$1,000 to those injured in the accident.

Train disasters occur almost yearly in Egypt. Passengers are often packed into cramped compartments like cattle. In some trains, people take small animals into the carriages.

Compartments also are stuffed with luggage for long journeys. The death toll is Egypt's highest in a train disaster since a collision in 1995 killed 75 people.

(SOURCE: *Telegraph*, Calcutta)

ERITREA

a. Slovak peacekeeper killed: A Slovak member of the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) was killed in a car crash, Feb 11, bringing to three the number of UNMEE peacekeepers killed since the mission was deployed in September 2000.

Corporal Vladimir Kollar, 24, served with the Slovak de-mining detachment in the mission's eastern sector of the buffer zone between the two countries, an UNMEE press release said. He died while delivering water to fellow peacekeepers.

He was one of 195 Slovak peacekeepers in the mission, 40 of whom worked in the eastern sector along with the Kenyan contingent in mechanical and manual demining, UNMEE said.

There are up to 4,200 international peacekeepers operating within UNMEE.

(SOURCE: *Monitor*, Kampala)

ETHIOPIA

a. UN Security Council ends mission: All 15 members of the Security Council headed back to New York, Feb 25, having completed a mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea.

During the mission, Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi and Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki agreed to work with the United Nations to move the peace process forward.

"The Security Council, having had very useful meetings with the leaders of the two countries, is very pleased that a final legal settlement of the border issue is about to be reached in accordance with the Algiers Agreements that opened the way to peace between Ethiopia and Eritrea," said ambassador Ole Peter Kolby of Norway, chairman of the Council mission.

"The Security Council mission expressed to the parties the commitment of the United Nations to assist in the implementation of the upcoming ruling by the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission on the border between the two countries and the completion of the peace process," ambassador Kolby said.

"In our meetings, both leaders stated their desire to continue to work closely with the United Nations to this end."

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

[Background Info. Ethiopia, page 447:b]

GABON

a. Ebola cases rise to 55: The number of cases of Ebola haemorrhagic fever in Gabon and the Republic of Congo rose to 55, of whom 46 died, the World Health Organization reported, Feb 21.

The UN agency quoted the Gabonese ministry of health as saying, Feb 18, that 23 of the cases were confirmed by laboratory testing while 32 were epidemiologically linked. Contact tracing and follow-up were continuing, it added.

Guy Zimmerman of the International Federation of the Red Cross said that news reports, Feb 19, saying the outbreak had spread from the north-eastern Gabonese province of Ogooue-Ivindo to the northern town of Oyem, near the border with Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, and Congo turned out false.

"Only a possible contact was found, not a case", he said.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Gabon, page 652:a]

KENYA

a. MPs slam Central Bank governor: Central Bank of Kenya (CBK) governor Nahashon Nyagah was taken to task by the Parliamentary Finance Committee, Feb 20, over his stand on the "Donde" Act.

Nyagah is on record as saying he could not implement the Act, which seeks to control interest rates levied by commercial banks, before some sections are amended. According to sources, Nyagah was given a thorough dressing-down for "speaking politics", instead of implementing the Act which was enacted by Parliament in 2001.

Nyagah appeared before the committee, Feb 20, for the second day running. The meeting was chaired by Kinango MP Simeon Mkallah. Gem MP Joe Donde, who initiated the motion, also attended.

"Members felt that Nyagah has been playing politics and siding with commercial banks instead of implementing laws enacted by Parliament," said one MP.

b. Government steps up war on illegal aliens: The Department of Immigration in conjunction with police has launched a major crackdown on a syndicate involved in the theft of both local and foreign passports.

Consequently, several foreigners - five Chinese, two Somalis and two Sri Lankans have been arrested in connection with forged travel documents, it was reported, Feb 20.

Immigration officials announced, Feb 19, that the foreigners would be repatriated after being charged. They were due to appear in court for being in the country illegally. The Chinese were travelling on forged Singapore passports while the Somalis and the Sri Lankans entered the country on forged British and Ethiopian passports. The Deputy Principal Immigration Officer, Mumo Mbole, said the department was "struggling" to cope with the rising wave of illegal entries into the country.

c. 13,000 old cases thrown out: Some 13,000 cases that had been pending before the High Court in Nairobi for decades have been dismissed, it was reported, Feb 21.

Chief Justice Bernard Chunga said parties involved in the suits failed to pursue them after injunctions were issued.

"There is a tendency to blame our courts for the thousands of pending cases. This is a misconception since courts only act when moved by the parties involved," he said.

He was addressing judges, magistrates and lawyers who attended a dinner organised by the Rift Valley Law Society and members of the Judiciary at the Rift Valley Sports Club in Nakuru.

Earlier, the society chairman, James Aming'a, had urged the CJ to look into ways of addressing the backlog of land cases that have been pending before the High Court in Nakuru for decades.

d. 344 arrested over policeman's murder: Police have arrested 344 suspects following the killing of a senior CID officer in Nairobi.

One suspect was found peddling 50 rounds of ammunition, it was reported, Feb 19. Senior Superintendent of Police Dismas Barasa was shot dead outside his Jamhuri Estate house, Feb 16.

Detectives have interrogated waiters and patrons at the Dagoretti Corner restaurant where the Barasa and his cousin had a meal before the shooting incident. Barasa was gunned down by four armed gangsters who blocked his Toyota car with a carjacked taxi.

They shot him in the chest and later drove off in the taxi which they abandoned a few metres away from the scene before disappearing into the Kongo slums in Kawangware. Police suspect that the killers trailed Barasa from the restaurant to his residence.

e. Nairobi, Turkey sign agreement: Kenya and Turkey, Feb 14, signed an agreement to co-operate on regional and international issues of common interest.

The protocol is expected to widen areas of co-operation between the two countries as well as enhance consultations on common problems.

Both parties underlined the important role the private sector plays in the development of trade relations and agreed to intensify co-operation among umbrella organisations of the private sector in their countries.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

LIBERIA

a. Taylor vows to defend country from rebel attacks: President Charles Taylor said, Feb 15, he was under constitutional obligation to defend Liberia from any aggression.

But the President indicated that the arms embargo and the UN sanction would impede the country's ability to adequately defend itself against the ongoing rebel aggression.

"The existence of an arms embargo against this Republic continues to tie our hands, and we must all fight to get it removed. If it is not removed, I am afraid that we would have more bloodshed..." the President said when he met religious leaders and eminent Liberians at the Executive Mansion, Feb 15.

"...I believe that if we have not had an embargo, this war would have ended..." Taylor said adding that, "I will do what I have to do to maintain peace and stability in the country."

"... We have been doing our best pulling here and there, but in order to defend this country from the type of aggression that we see, this government's hands will have to be untied by the international community..." President added.

'One million people displaced': Renewed fighting between government troops and the Liberia United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) rebels have left about one million people internally displaced, President Charles Taylor said, Feb 13.

The President made the statement when a visiting European Union delegation met him at the Executive Mansion.

President Taylor told the delegation that, as the result of the latest fighting in the country, about a million people were directly or indirectly affected as IDPs.

Presidential press secretary Vaanii Paasewe told reporters that the President informed the EU delegation that the attacks by the dissidents have caused thousands of people to flee their homes in Lofa, Gbarpolu and Bomi Counties.

Newspaper closed down, four journalists arrested: A newspaper was closed down and four journalists arrested after the declaration of the state of emergency

In a letter addressed to the minister for information, Reginald Goodridge, Reporters Sans Frontiers (Reporters Without Borders - RSF) protested against the arrest of several journalists and the closure of the private *Analyst* newspaper.

"The state of emergency is an exceptional situation which should not, under any circumstances, be a pretext for the authorities to censor and muzzle the independent press. As far as we know, these journalists were simply doing their job", Robert Minard, secretary-general of RSF, pointed out.

"Depriving the Liberian population of independent news sources in the current climate is particularly dangerous, and is unlikely to help ease the situation", the secretary-general added.

According to information obtained by RSF, the Monrovia police arrested at least four journalists from the *Analyst* newspaper, Feb 13. The director of the publication, Stanley Sankor, and a reporter, James Llody, are among those detained.

According to the chief of police, Paul Mulbah, they were arrested because of several articles by them "poisoned the minds of the people".

b. Antonov 12 plane crashes: An Antonov 12 aircraft crashed about four miles away from the runway at the Roberts International Airport(RIA), Feb 15.

A ministry of information release said the aircraft sought permission for emergency landing at about 5:am while flying over Liberia's airspace.

The information ministry release, quoting authorities of the RIA and the ministry of transport, said a short time after the granting of the emergency landing permission, "the plane crashed and exploded upon impact." Meanwhile, the civil aviation department of the transport ministry is said to be conducting investigation.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

MALAGASY

a. Ravalomanana demands referendum: An arrest warrant has been issued against Marc Ravalomanana, who was 'sworn-in' as leader of the island nation, Feb 22.

Ravalomanana, Feb 23, called for a referendum to determine whether he should be confirmed as head of state. He told the BBC he wanted the referendum held in order to prove his support among the Malagasy people and to legalise his position as President. He accused the incumbent President, Didier Ratsiraka, of robbing him of the December 2001 presidential poll and said only a referendum could end the political stand-off which rocked the country since the election and pitted the two contenders against each other.

Some hours after Ravalomanana declared himself President, Feb 22, the Ratsiraka government imposed a state of emergency granting the authorities sweeping powers to crack down on the opposition, banning demonstrations and public gatherings.

Presbyterians appeal for US action: Clifton Kirkpatrick, head of the 2.5-million member Presbyterian Church has addressed a letter to US President George W. Bush and Secretary of State Colin L. Powell seeking attention to the worsening political crisis in Malagasy, it was reported, Feb 20.

"There are numerous alleged discrepancies in the electoral process that unfolded on December 16, 2001; moreover, there is wide disagreement as to the percentages of the vote received by the two candidates who received the highest number of votes, current President Didier Ratsiraka and Antananarivo Mayor Marc Ravalomanana" the letter said.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MOROCCO

a. Release all war detainees, urges ICRC: The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has called for the release of all persons detained in connection with the conflict between Morocco and the Polisario Front over the future of Western Sahara, it was reported, Feb 25.

The call followed visits by the ICRC to the families of some of the 1,362 Moroccans detained by the Polisario Front (Popular Front for the Liberation of Sagui el-hamra and Rio de Oro), the committee reported in its latest update on the conflict.

ICRC visited 396 families between February 3 and Feb 14, giving them news of their detained relatives, and collecting photos and letters to take to the prisoners, the ICRC said.

The ICRC expressed concern about the "increasing poor physical and mental health of the 1,362 prisoners, 916 of whom were captured over 20 years ago" and called for their release.

The Polisario Front freed 115 of its prisoners in January. Morocco says it has no prisoners of war, but the Polisario contends that it does, a humanitarian source said.

[Background Info. Morocco, page 644:b]

b. 4 Moroccans held in Rome for plotting against US: The Italian police said, Feb 20, that they have arrested four Moroccans in an anti-terrorist probe.

The Italian news report said the suspects possessed a cyanide compound, maps marking the US embassy in Rome and the capital's water supply network. The US embassy thanked the Italian police and security forces for their "excellent work concerning the most recent security threat against the embassy".

But it added that "the case in question is still an ongoing investigation, and therefore it would be premature to comment any further at this time". Col Gianfranco Cavallo of the Carabinieri paramilitary police who carried out the raid declined to comment on new reports that the Moroccans had a poisonous substance and the water supply maps. The operation was described as the biggest probe so far into suspected Islamic terrorists in Rome.

The arrests were carried out before dawn, Feb 19, in a poor neighbourhood on the southern outskirts of Rome.

Home ministry undersecretary Alfredo Mantovano told Italian state radio that the police and intelligence services had worked together in the probe. He urged citizens to tell authorities if they notice anything unusual that could indicate terrorists' plans.

Il Messaggero, a Rome daily, said the suspected Islamic terrorists were in possession of four kilograms of powdered cyanide and maps of Rome's water system. The ANSA news agency said the men had ferrocyanide, a compound which contain cyanide. The men were charged with illegal possession of the compound, said ANSA.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg and *Asian Age*, New Delhi)

NAMIBIA

a. President's aide charged with policeman's murder: Ephraim Dozze Ileka, personal assistant to the President, was arrested and charged with murder, Feb 19, for shooting a police sergeant in the capital of Namibia.

Ileka (50) was granted bail of N\$3 000 when he appeared before Magistrate Clemens Hausiku in the Windhoek court. The case was adjourned to March 14. Ileka was represented by Dirk Conradie. Initially the police had allowed him to remain free following the shooting incident at Ausspahnplatz in Windhoek.

Sergeant Michael Mwinga Sillilo (38), who was attached to the Police Commercial Branch, died after he was shot in the head while seated in Ileka's car, which was parked in front of the Le Club gambling house in the Ausspahnplatz area.

(SOURCE: *Namibian*, Windhoek)

NIGER

a. Cooperation agreements signed with Japan: The governments of Japan and Niger signed, Feb 13, two agreements worth US \$3.4 million to support Niger's anti-poverty programme and improve its health system.

The first agreement, worth FCFA 500 million (about US \$676,000), will reduce Niger's debt service to Japan, thereby freeing up money for medical equipment, the Japanese embassy in Ivory Coast, which is also responsible for Niger, said in a statement.

The second agreement, worth FCFA 2 billion (US \$2.7 million), is to improve the stock of medicine and other materials for fighting malaria, respiratory, and diarrhoeal diseases.

Signed in the capital Niamey by ambassador Yuji Kurokawa and Niger's minister for foreign affairs and cooperation, Aichatou Mindaoudou, the latest agreements bring to over US \$325 million the money the Japan has donated to Niger since 1976.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

RWANDA

a. ICTR urges Kinshasa to hand over genocide suspects: The registrar of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) has urged the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to hand over to the tribunal indicted genocide suspects, it was reported, Feb 19.

"The Democratic Republic of Congo is a key state in the Central African region for the ultimate success of the ICTR in discharging its mandate," the registrar said during a visit to the DRC.

The registrar visited the DRC from February 12 to Feb 16, as part of a drive to enhance co-operation of Central African states with the tribunal, according to an ICTR press release. He sought the DRC's support in handing over persons suspected of crimes of genocide and other violations of international humanitarian law during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.

The registrar, Adama Dieng met the President of the DRC Joseph Kabila, Feb 15 and the Congolese leader assured him of his government's co-operation with the tribunal.

"We are very pleased with President Kabila's assurances of support and look forward to further developments on this matter", Dieng said.

'I didn't take part in the genocide': Genocide suspect Laurent Semanza, Feb 20, told judges at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) that he did not take part in the genocide in Rwanda.

"I could not run over a snake while driving, let alone kill people", he said.

"What happened in Rwanda is terrible," said Semanza, who was testifying in his own defence. "I cannot even stand watching anybody slaughter chicken," he added, to emphasize that he did not take part in the April-June 1994 genocide.

Semanza, 57, is a former mayor of Bicumbi commune, Kigali rural province. He has denied 14 counts of genocide and crimes against humanity including rape and persecution.

Semanza said he was not aware of any plans to kill ethnic Tutsi in 1994. "I would have denounced the killings," said Semanza. More than 800,000 ethnic Tutsi and politically moderate ethnic Hutu were killed during the genocide.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Rwanda, page 656:a]

SIERRA LEONE

a. Former rebel group urges UN to lift travel ban: The Revolutionary United Front (RUF), which waged a ten-year war against the central authority in Sierra Leone, has asked the United Nations to lift the 1998 travel ban on its officials ahead of general elections set for May 14, the UN Mission in Sierra Leone reported, Feb 15.

RUF secretary-general Pallo Bangura and another official, Mike Lamin, made the request at a meeting, Feb 14, with the deputy special representative of the Secretary-General for Operations and Management in Sierra Leone, Behrooz Sadry.

"According to Bangura, the travel ban was hindering the activities of the RUF as the country moves closer to the presidential and parliamentary elections," UNAMSIL said.

"Of immediate concern to the RUF was a temporary lifting of the ban to enable its chief of administration Jonathan Kposowa, and Lamin to travel to Senegal to meet with the chairman of the Economic Community of West African States on party business," UNAMSIL added.

The travel ban was part of a set of measures designed to compel the RUF to renounce war and hand its guns.

In the letter to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan requesting that the ban be lifted, Bangura also asked for the government to establish a trust fund to transform the RUF into a political party, under the terms of the Lome peace agreement of 1999.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SOMALIA

a. Swiss "angel of mercy" killed: A Swiss aid worker, murdered in the town of Marka, was described as an "angel of mercy" by local residents, Feb 25.

Aw-Maye Shuja'a Sufi, a local elder, said that 70 year-old Verena Karer was "one of us". "The whole town is saddened by her death," he said.

Karer, who arrived in Marka - 100 km south of Mogadishu - as a voluntary nurse in 1993, at the height of the famine in Somalia, was killed by two gunmen, Feb 22, Muhammad Dahir, an employee of a local non-governmental organisation (NGO), said. She was murdered in the compound of a secondary school she had built in 2001. According to Muhammad, she never allowed her guards to carry guns. "She was well known in Marka for walking around without any bodyguards," he said.

Local sources said that the prime suspect behind the killing was a former teacher who had been dismissed by Karer "for being a troublemaker". The former teacher was in custody, along with two other men, the sources said.

Police investigators dispatched from Mogadishu by the Transitional National Government confirmed they had arrested three male suspects. "I cannot give you any more details on the investigation, except to say it is still ongoing, and we should be able to issue a statement soon," a police source said.

b. Hundreds flee fighting in southwest: Hundreds of families are fleeing their homes in the southwestern regions of Somalia for fear of renewed fighting, local sources said, Feb 20.

The exodus follows two outbreaks of heavy fighting within a week between opposing militias in the town of Bardhere.

The fighting, in which over 50 people were killed and many more wounded, occurred, Feb 12, and again, Feb 18. It pitted forces of the Juba Valley Alliance, which supports the Transitional National Government (TNG), against those of the opposition Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council (SRRC).

Families were leaving Bardhere town and the surrounding villages to the east, which bore the brunt of the fighting, and were moving in response to reports of renewed fighting, Abdi Gesey, a Bardhere businessman, said. The two militias were reportedly receiving reinforcements and preparing to renew hostilities, he said.

c. Hosain Aideed vows to topple govt: Hosain Aideed, the son of warlord Mohammed Farah Aideed, has pledged to topple the government, which America claims is harbouring Al-Qaeda terrorists.

Comparing his struggle against Islamic militants to that of the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan, Hosain Aideed, a 40-year-old American citizen who once served as a US Marine in Mogadishu, said that with American help he can achieve his aim.

"I have the key to the country," he said. Somalia's Islamic militants, the majority of whom are believed to belong to the Al-Ittihad group, are suspected by US officials of giving refuge to Al-Qaeda terrorists.

US President Bush named Al-Ittihad as a terrorist group in September 2001.

While several Al-Ittihad training camps have been demolished, it is believed that a good number of the terrorists still operate in northwestern Somalia and that some senior members have strong links to Osama Bin Laden.

"Somalia is the second haven for Osama Bin Laden," Aidedd said. Aideed has set himself up in opposition in neighbouring Ethiopia and claims to have 85% of the support of the Somali people and a militia of "15,000 active men or 1.5 million inactive reserves".

He chairs the Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council, an umbrella coalition which aims at toppling the current Transitional Government based in Mogadishu. The TNG, in turn, accuses the SRRC of being a tool of the Ethiopians, who have a natural fear of Somalia being turned into an Islamic base.

Aideed's offer of help to the US is particularly ironic, coming as it does after the disastrous US military campaign in Somalia in 1993.

At its height, Mohammed Farah Aideed, the Italian- and Soviet-educated warlord, became America's Public Enemy Number One. By waging fierce clan battles for control of turf and the humanitarian aid which flooded into the country, Aideed senior is believed to have been largely responsible for the chaos, misery and anarchy which reigned over Somalia.

Despite a major manhunt, the Americans never got to Aideed's father, who died from battle wounds in 1996.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi and *Statesman*, Calcutta)

SOUTH AFRICA

a. Mandela denies rift with Mbeki: Nelson Mandela, Feb 19, brushed aside speculation of a growing rift with President Thabo Mbeki over South Africa's controversial handling of AIDS scourge.

"This feeling that there is a rift between us is totally untrue," Mandela said in a radio interview after meeting Mbeki and senior members of the ruling African National Congress (ANC) to discuss the AIDS crisis.

South African newspapers reported, Feb 19, that Mandela has locked horns with Mbeki over the issue, but that the two leaders later agreed to close ranks.

The 83-year-old Mandela, who stepped down as President in 1999, has in recent weeks made several strong statements on HIV/AIDS.

The country has the largest number of people in the world living with HIV and AIDS with an estimated one in nine South Africans infected. Mbeki has drawn criticism both at home and abroad for publicly questioning the link between AIDS and HIV, the virus that causes it, and for refusing to provide drugs that can help prevent mother-to-child transmission of AIDS.

Row over AIDS drug: The issue of the provision of anti-retroviral drug Nevirapine to HIV-affected pregnant mothers in South Africa has once again blown up into a major controversy.

The national health minister, Manto Tshabalala-Msimang, has strongly condemned the move by the provincial Premier of the Gauteng Province, Mbhazima Shillowa, to fast-track the delivery of Nevirapine in his province.

"The Premier's move contradicts with national policy," she said. The minister said the government was monitoring 18 pilot projects in various state hospitals where Nevirapine was in use. Gauteng was the first fully-fledged province to embark on a programme to provide ARVs and it was thought that the government was moving towards overcoming the AIDS controversy that it has become struck with over the past few years.

The Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal provinces were the first two regions to take unilateral decisions to go ahead with the provisions because of the AIDS pandemic.

(SOURCE: *Telegraph*, Calcutta and *Hindu*, Madras)

[Background Info. South Africa, page 547:a]

SUDAN

a. Peace talks suspended after gunship attack: The United States, Feb 21, suspended peace discussions with the Sudanese government after forces loyal to it attacked a relief centre in southern region, killing 17 people.

"We have demanded from the Sudanese government a full and complete explanation of what happened," US State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said in a statement.

"Until we receive a full and complete response from the government of Sudan, the United States is suspending all discussions with Khartoum about the peace process."

The Sudanese army, Feb 21, issued a statement denying that it was deliberately targeting civilians and alleged that accusations to that effect were "lies" being put out by the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A).

It insisted that its forces were engaged in protecting the country's oil-producing regions and the people who worked there.

b. Vatican official suggests human rights campaign: A cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church has suggested that the time may be right for the launch of an international campaign to protest against Sudan for violating human rights, it was reported, Feb 15.

Cardinal Roberto Tucci, president of Vatican Radio's administration committee, made the call recently when commenting on the case of Abok Alfa Akok, who had been condemned to death by stoning for allegedly being pregnant out of wedlock.

An appeals court in southern Darfur state, bordering the Central African Republic, had recently overturned the sentence of death by stoning against Akok, and sent the case back to a lower court in the state for fresh sentencing.

The criminal court in Nyala, about 800 km southwest of Khartoum, sentenced Akok to death by stoning for adultery in December 2001, according to news reports.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

TANZANIA

a. Canada cancels \$84 m debt: Canada announced, Feb 11, it was forgiving the entire Canadian \$83.6 million (US\$52 million) in debt owed by Tanzania.

Canadian finance minister Paul Martin said Tanzania, one of the world's poorest, had taken steps to reform its economy and make poverty reduction a priority.

"Tanzania's debt load is unsustainable and cancelling these debts will enable it to invest more in critical areas such as health care, HIV-AIDS prevention and primary education," Martin said.

The announcement came two days after a meeting of G-7 finance ministers chaired by Martin called for countries seeking development aid to commit themselves to "sound policies, good governance and the rule of law".

Debt relief is a major demand by anti-globalisation protesters who want the so-called First World powers to halt policies they consider harmful to the developing world.

Canada has made African assistance a priority for 2002, with Prime Minister Jean Chretien promoting a broad programme for consideration at the G-8 summit scheduled for June in Kananaskis, Alberta.

The G-8 comprises Canada, the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and Russia.

b. AIDS carrier jailed for 30 years: For the first time in Tanzania's history a resident magistrate's court in Dar-es-Salaam has sentenced 51-year-old man to 30 years in jail for killing a 16-year-old girl whom he infected with the HIV virus, it was reported, Feb 20.

Evidence adduced in court showed that Dar-es-Salaam businessman Salehe Selemani killed the girl after he raped her between September 2000 and January 2001. The convict is said to have lived with the deceased for five months as "man and wife" without the girl's consent and contrary to a Tanzanian law that sets the marriage age at 18 years.

Evidence produced in the court included a doctor's report that showed that the girl had been raped and infected with the deadly HIV virus.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

UGANDA

a. MP abducted, tortured: Soldiers, Feb 14, abducted Latif Sebaggala, MP, and four of his colleagues, all agents of incumbent Kampala Mayor John Ssebaana Kizito.

The men numbering about seven, who picked the MP and his colleagues from his office 4 miles on Gayaza Road, were suspected to be from the Kalangala Action Plan headed by Presidential Advisor Maj. Roland Kakoza Mutale.

Sebaggala said that the officer in charge was identified as Sgt. Majid Ssegane and that he claimed he was acting on orders of President Yoweri Museveni. Sebaggala lost Shs 1.2m and a mobile telephone.

Sebaggala, the younger brother of former Kampala mayor Nasser Ntege Sebaggala, was beaten up and dumped onto the back of a pick-up and ordered to denounce his support to Ssebaana, something he refused to accept.

b. 'Big people' involved in drug trafficking: The acting deputy director at the Criminal Investigations Department (CID), Okoth Ochora, has said he will soon arrest big people and parade them before the press for their involvement in drug trafficking.

Ochora was speaking at the CID headquarters in Kampala. His revelation comes at a time when Uganda is being seen as a leading drug transit country to Europe and America because of lack of a deterrent law. Ochora showed journalists three Pakistani nationals who were recently arrested with narcotic drugs at Entebbe airport. Zahir Khan was arrested, Feb 18,

with six kilograms of heroin valued at Shs 240m which he had concealed in a false bottom suitcases. He travelled by air from Peshawar through Dubai, Nairobi, Entebbe and was to go back through the same route after delivering the drugs to a contact in Kampala.

Another Pakistani, Gulander Khan, was also arrested with swallowed heroin. He also used the same route.

Dilawar Khan another Pakistani. was arrested, Feb 18, at Entebbe after he swallowed 50 pallets (500 grams) of heroin valued at Shs 27m.

(SOURCE: *New Vision*, Kampala)

ZAMBIA

a. EU withholds \$75m aid: The European Union (EU) did not give the Zambian government pledged support amounting to US \$75 million for fiscal year 2001 due to gaps in transparency and performance, it was reported, Feb 22.

EU head of delegation Dr. Jochen Krebs disclosed, Feb 21, that delays in implementing structural adjustment projects led them to conduct an audit and that it was agreed in the auditor's report that something had to be done. He said government needed to borrow from the domestic market in order to survive.

According to reliable information, the EU had conducted three audits into government performance. Dr. Krebs said the audit was done with government's knowledge and the report, still in draft form, would be made public once finalised as there was nothing to hide.

He said they had confidence in the words of both President Levy Mwanawasa and finance minister Emmanuel Kasonde who have pledged that transparency and accountability would be established. He said they have given the new administration a framework so that they adhere to a time-table which begins with budget presentation most likely on March 1.

b. Pakistani wheat quarantined: The soil and crop research branch of the ministry of agriculture has quarantined a milling company in Lusaka after discovering infected wheat imported from Pakistan, it was reported, Feb 22.

The plant protection and quarantine division at Mount Makulu research station has since prescribed measures to counter the threat of the disease known as Karnal Bunt (*Tilletia indica*) spreading in the country.

A letter to the general manager of the milling company signed by acting deputy director of the branch Dr Catherine Mungoma obtained by the *Times*, said the move followed the monitoring exercise in October 2001 on stored wheat from most millers where suspicions were raised about the Pakistan wheat from where the disease had been reported.

Dr Mungoma said in the letter to the wheat committee of the Zambia National Farmers' Union (ZNFU), director of trade at the ministry of commerce and the senior economist, marketing at the ministry that spores of Karnal Bunt were detected from samples collected from the milling company on January 30, 2002.

"The milling company will with immediate effect be put under quarantine and all the wheat and wheat products at the milling premises must not be moved to any other place," the letter said.

c. 30 textile mills face closure: Over 30 companies which used to be in the textile industry in Livingstone are facing closure, mayor Frederick Mwendapole has said.

Speaking to journalists attending the Zambia Institute of Mass Communication (ZAMCOM), Livingstone, recently Mwendapole said the companies could not compete with foreign products. Mwendapole complained that the solid waste management problem was getting bigger.

"Our solid waste management problem is getting bigger but we hope that with the help of donors something will be done," he said. Mwendapole said the problem with the council has been the neglecting of garbage collection. At the moment the council is dumping in a place that is not legally designated by the Environmental Council of Zambia (ECZ) as a dumping site.

He said Livingstone had high unemployment levels due to the socio-economic impact of the closure of companies.

Mwendapole said the World Bank has accepted to help in funding developmental projects in Livingstone whose effects on the town would be noticed in the next 18 months. The development would include lighting up the road from the border post to Livingstone. But the National Heritage Conservation Commission (NHCC) is objecting to the lighting up of the road.

(SOURCE: *Times of Zambia*, Lusaka)

ZIMBABWE

a. US clamps ban on Mugabe: President Robert Mugabe began the election campaign, Feb 23, under new US sanctions for alleged use of political violence and intimidation.

Mugabe, 78, addressed a rally in drought-stricken Matabeleland North province ahead of the March 9-10 poll, in which he faces the biggest challenge of his 22-year rule from Morgan Tsvangirai, leader of the Movement for Democratic Change.

The opposition party said the Zimbabwean police had shot at Tsvangirai's convoy, Feb 22. Two South African election observers were caught up in a separate attack by militant supporters of Mugabe's government.

US President George W Bush, Feb 22, ordered a ban on the entry into the United States of Mugabe and senior members of his government and their families, and people who through their business dealings benefited from his government's policies.

The European Union, Feb 18, imposed a visa ban and asset freeze on 20 top Zimbabwean officials and withdrew its election observer mission from the country.

The former British colony is also facing a severe food crisis because of economic downturn and the often violent seizure of White owned farms, according to UN officials supplying emergency food aid. Southern African election observers in the country have warned that a wave of political violence threatens chances of a free and fair poll.

Tsvangirai had stopped to greet supporters in a village about 10 km from Masvingo when the shooting happened, his party said. There were no injuries and police spokesmen said they were unaware of the incident.

Tsvangirai continued, on to a political rally in Masvingo, where the MDC has a strong following in the city. Mugabe's supporters hold sway in the country side. In the first incident involving foreign election observers, the two South Africans escaped unharmed when 200 pro-government militants armed with stones and iron bars attacked an MDC office in the central town of Kwekwe, Feb 22.

EU poll observer expelled: A standoff between Zimbabwe and the European Union deepened after Harare, risking EU sanctions, threw out the head of the EU mission sent to observe the presidential poll.

President Robert Mugabe, facing the toughest electoral challenge in his 22 years of power, is looking to his neighbours for support in the row with the EU, it was reported, Feb 18.

Zimbabwe expelled Swedish diplomat Pierre Schori, Feb 16, after he started his political work after entering the country on a tourist visa. Schori, who is also Sweden's UN ambassador, called the decision by the Zimbabwean authorities to order him out of the country—three weeks before the March 9-10 residential polls—"unfortunate".

"The decision to revoke my visa and demand that I leave provides a particularly unfortunate twist in the ongoing dispute between the Zimbabwe government and the EU over election observation," said Schori before he boarded the flight out of Harare, Feb 16.

"Leaving Harare today, my feelings are more of sorrow than of anger. I know that most Zimbabweans earnestly desire that relations with the EU should continue to deepen and flourish," he added.

"A Zimbabwean official said Schori had breached his visa conditions. "He is guilty of political arrogance and of insulting behaviour".

Mugabe has rejected European criticism of his human rights record and accusations of dirty tricks and intimidation in the campaign for the Presidential election.

Sweden and former colonial power Britain are among six EU countries Zimbabwe has pointedly refused to invite to observe the presidential election, which approaches against a backdrop of deepening economic crisis and political violence.

State television reported, Feb 16, that Mugabe would meet Malawian President Bakili Muluzi, chairman of the 14-nation Southern African Development Community (SADC), and Mozambican leader Joaquim Chissano, Feb 17.

The three would discuss the elections and "the situation in the country", state TV said.

But analysts say the SADC, which did not consider calls for sanctions against Zimbabwe at its January summit, lacks the collective political will to enforce commitments from Mugabe that the elections will be free and fair.

They say a tradition of solidarity in the face of Western criticism has undermined the bloc's influence.

More curbs on foreign media: Fresh evidence of the scale of political violence emerged as President Mugabe's regime increased its curbs on the international media, it was reported, Feb 21.

Human rights groups said that another eight people had died at the hands of Mugabe's lawless militiamen.

That brought to at least 26 the number killed since the beginning of the year, the worst in the same period in the past two years, according to the Zimbabwe Human Rights Non-Governmental Organisation Forum.

Scores of journalists from news organisations across the world have been banned barely weeks after President Mugabe and Jonathan Moyo, his information minister made explicit public commitments to regional and international leaders that the world's media would have unfettered access to the presidential elections.

Almost every British, Dutch, Danish, Swedish, Australian and New Zealand reporter who applied for accreditation to cover the poll on March 9 and 10 has been rejected.

Not a single reporter from South Africa's three biggest newspaper groups—Independent Newspapers, the Afrikaner group Beeld and Johnnicks Publishing, the black-owned group that publishes *the Sunday Times*—has been given permission to enter the country, prompting the South African Editor's Forum to appeal to President Mbeki to intercede with the Zimbabwean authorities on their behalf.

Copies of all unsuccessful accreditation applications have been forwarded to Zimbabwe's chief immigration officer so that journalists who are refused entry can be apprehended by immigration officials if they enter the country as tourists.

Television stations that have been accredited to cover the vote, including ITN, CNN and the South African Broadcasting Corporation, will be dependent on the state-owned Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation to transmit their reports abroad.

Some television reporters, who declined to be identified, have expressed fears that their broadcasts will be monitored or vetted by ZBC officials and may be blocked if the Zimbabwe authorities disapprove of their content.

Whereas journalists from countries seen by Harare as hostile to Mugabe's attempt to extend his 22-year rule have been the subject of a blanket ban, others have been singled out and refused entry simply for writing articles critical of Mugabe and his government.

John Murphy, the Africa correspondent for the *Baltimore Sun* was refused permission to enter Zimbabwe for writing a profile of Mugabe which Harare found offensive.

After asking George Charmaba, a senior ministry of information official, why he had been banned he was told: "You didn't think we'd be reading the *Baltimore Sun* did you?"

Others, including *The Washington Post* correspondent, have been told that their applications have been lost.

In its report, the Zimbabwe human rights forum said that 15 of those who had died had been supporters of the Movement for Democratic Change, led by the opposition presidential candidate Morgan Tsvangirai, and five belonged to Mugabe's ruling Zanu party. The political affiliation of another six was not known.

Pretoria to be neutral in Harare-EU conflict: South Africa will not intervene in the ongoing dispute between the Zimbabwean government and the European Union over the EU's observer rights in the country's upcoming elections, it was reported, Feb 12.

Leader of the South African observer mission Dr Sam Motsuenyane, Feb 12, said: "The relations between Zimbabwe and the European Union is really outside the purview of our interests. We won't intervene in any way at this stage where there is a problem."

He was responding to questions during a media briefing ahead of the departure by the first group of the 50-member strong delegation to witness Zimbabwe's preparations for the elections on March 9 and 10. Motsuenyane said the South Africans believed a free and fair presidential election was still possible in Zimbabwe.

South Africa would deploy its members at various parts of the country so as to be in a position to operate in a non-partisan manner but "would not run the elections there".

Motsuenyane rejected suggestions that the South African mission was being funded by the EU, saying the funds had come from various South African organisations.

Journalists union suspends Peta as secretary-general: Disgraced journalist Basildon Peta, who lost his credibility after fabricating a detention story recently, has been suspended as the secretary-general of the Zimbabwe Union of Journalists with immediate effect, it was reported, Feb 21.

Peta, who has since fled to South Africa, also resigned as a special assignments editor with the weekly *Financial Gazette* after it surfaced that he had lied in a story carried by the *Independent* of Britain where he was a correspondent.

Peta rose to notoriety when, in an article for the British paper, he falsely alleged that he had been detained overnight by the police for organising a demonstration for journalists over the recently passed Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

However, in an almost similar story written for the *Financial Gazette*, Peta correctly reported that he was only interrogated in the presence of his lawyer and released that same day.

In a statement, Feb 20, ZUJ president Matthew Takaona said in suspending Peta the union had considered the serious nature of the allegations against him.

"Peta's arrest arose while conducting ZUJ business. The allegations have raised serious concern with the public, the

journalism fraternity and the police, who eventually lodged a formal complaint with us.

[Background Info. Zimbabwe, page 659:a]

b. Government close to breaching borrowing ceiling: The cash-strapped government is close to shooting through the ceiling of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe's borrowing limit of 20% of revenues collected, it was reported, Feb 15.

On average, the central bank lends the debt-ridden government between \$4 billion and \$5 billion a week.

According to the RBZ Act, the bank "shall not lend or advance moneys to or directly buy, discount or rediscount bills, notes or other obligations from the State or any fund established by the State so that the amount outstanding at any time exceeds the equivalent of 20% of the previous year's ordinary revenue of the State".

Since 2001, the government through the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority managed to collect \$131 billion against the targeted \$132 billion. That would effectively mean that government could only borrow \$26,2 billion, or 20% of the revenue collected.

One of the major weaknesses in the RBZ Act is that it does not specify the interest rate payment on the borrowings.

[Background Info. Zimbabwe, page 648:d]

c. Deadlock over mining fiscal policy: The government and the mining industry have reached a stalemate over the enactment of a mining fiscal policy, worsening the operations of the sector already experiencing viability problems, it was reported, Feb 15.

The ministry of mines and energy was supposed to table the mining fiscal policy document by November 2001, but to date, nothing is in place to work out strategies and policies which give more incentives to the sector.

Sources said preparations for the presidential poll and differences between government and captains of industry on a number of issues had put paid to any progress on the policy guidelines.

Besides locking horns over legal issues, certain aspects introduced by government favoured it more than the miners. One example was government's introduction of ringfencing which required mines to be assessed separately for tax purposes.

Mines which rake in huge profits would also be taxed heavily.

Analysts said the long delay raised suspicion on whether government was committed to restoring viability in the mining sector after the industry submitted its proposals to re-direct the ailing sector.

(SOURCE: *Asian Age*, New Delhi, *Hindu*, Madras and *Statesman*, Calcutta and *Independent*, Harare)

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ANGOLA

a. Dembo replaces Savimbi as UNITA chief: UNITA vice-president Antonio Dembo has taken over the interim leadership of the Angolan rebel group following the death of Jonas Savimbi, it was reported, Feb 26.

Dembo is in the interior of the war-torn nation and has made contact with some military commanders, spokesman Carlos Morgado said. "Things are moving forward," he said. The contacts were made "probably to reorganize the party and he already is in an easier position".

(See *Analysis*, page 684)

Morgado said Dembo's interim leadership must be confirmed by UNITA's powerful 58-member political commission, which he heads. Government troops killed Savimbi in eastern Angola, Feb 22. His death fuelled hopes for an end to the civil war that has gone on since 1975 in the former Portuguese colony.

Dembo, 58, was a trusted Savimbi aide and as vice president is the automatic successor under UNITA's constitution.

b. 'Peace prospects brighten': Angolan President Jose Eduardo do Santos told business executives and government officials, Feb 26, that peace prospects in the country have brightened with the death of UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi.

"Peace is, at this stage, priority number one" he said, adding that both sides had to find the "political will" to create reciprocal trust dos Santos was speaking at a dinner hosted by the Corporate Council of Africa, Feb 26.

Earlier, dos Santos, along with Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano and Botswana President Festus Mogae, met U.S. President George W. Bush for talks on peace and security in the southern Africa region. dos Santos told Bush he wanted to see a ceasefire "as soon as possible". Despite attacks by UNITA, Feb 25, that left nine people dead, the Angolan President said he was not discouraged.

[Background Info. Angola, page 661:a]

c. Europe to discuss 'blood diamond' trade: The Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa (NIZA), a member of the Fatal Transactions network, will discuss the blood diamond trade in Brussels, March 7.

The purpose of the meeting is to ensure that the EU takes its responsibility in stopping the vicious circle of trade and terror that continues fuelling Africa's most brutal wars.

Fatal Transactions is worried about the little progress made so far. An estimated 500,000 civilians have lost their lives over the past decade in the diamond wars of Angola, Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The issue of conflict diamonds has been public knowledge for years.

It has been debated in the United Nations. The European Commission, the industry and NGOs have discussed it since 2000 in the so-called 'Kimberley Process'. But although an effective control mechanism for rough diamonds has been the subject of almost a dozen meetings, no consumer can yet be sure that his or her diamond is not tainted with blood.

(SOURCE: *Times of Zambia*, Lusaka)

[Background Info. Angola, page 553:a]

BENIN

a. UNICEF launches development project: The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), in partnership with Benin's health ministry, has launched a programme to reduce the incidence of preventable diseases and ailments linked to poor nutrition of children, it was reported, March 4.

The programme targets infants up to five years old. It aims to protect them against tetanus, measles and other vaccine-preventable diseases, reduce the incidence of malaria, pneumonia and diarrhoea, and fight diseases linked to vitamin A deficiency. In the long term, the project aims to reduce the food deficiency/disease tandem by 25 per cent in selected regions in Benin.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BURKINA FASO

a. Security forces destroy narcotic drugs: Authorities in Burkina Faso, March 4, destroyed four tonnes of narcotic drugs worth 125 million francs (US \$165,000), including indian hemp, cannabis and prohibited tablets.

The symbolic destruction was carried out to mark Customs Day. The narcotics, security officials said, were hidden in fish and local spice bags by drug dealers who brought them into the country mainly from Nigeria and Ghana. Burkina Faso shares a border with those countries and four others, and is a transit country, they added. Officials also said drug consumption within Burkina Faso had increased but vowed to continue seizing consignments brought into the country.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BURUNDI

a. Twelve killed in ambushes: A total of seven soldiers have been killed in the past few days in rebel ambushes in western Burundi, Radio Publique Africaine (RPA) reported, Feb 26.

A vehicle travelling from Bujumbura to Rumonge, Feb 25, fell into a rebel ambush at Nyarukona in Gitaza zone, RPA said. Five people, including a soldier, were killed while four civilians were kidnapped during the incident and the vehicle burnt.

In another ambush in Bubanza province, northwestern Burundi, six soldiers were killed in an ambush, Feb 26, as they were walking to Kivyuka market in Musigati commune.

The attack was to avenge the death of Louis Sinabajije, a former leader of the rebel Forces pour la defense de la democratie (FDD), who was gunned down recently during a confrontation with the regular army, RPA added. Kivyuka market was deserted immediately after the exchanges of gunfire intensified between the assailants and the army, which had come to the rescue of their slain colleagues.

(SOURCE: *New Vision*, Kampala)

CAMEROON

a. Kigali murder suspect flees to Cameroon: Rwandese genocide suspect Jean-Baptiste Gatete is now living in Cameroon after changing identity, it was reported, March 11.

Gatete is listed by Arusha-based International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) as "a most wanted suspect" who took part in the 1994 mass murder in Rwanda. The other two most wanted suspects now in police custody at the Arusha special prison for genocide suspects are Sylvestre Gacumbitsi, the former Mayor of Rusumo, Kibungo, and Vincent Rutaganira, the former Kibuye Member of Parliament.

A diplomatic source said in Dar that Gatete was in Cameroon after fleeing from a Tanzania refugee camp to the Seychelles. However, fearing that he would be identified and arrested there, he went on to Cameroon, where he is said to be posing as a teacher and preacher. Gatete is "accused of organising and chairing the meeting on the night of April 6, 1994, in which the crucial decisions about genocide in Murambi were taken. He also incited the killings at Gakoni on the night of April 6."

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

a. UN to launch "culture of peace" campaign: A country-wide three-month "culture of peace" campaign will be launched, March 12, in the Central African Republic (CAR), the UN has announced.

"Given the numerous resolutions adopted by the UN Security Council regarding the Central African Republic with regard to the need for a culture of peace, national unity, and democracy and good governance, such a programme should be considered

a priority among priorities," the UN mission in CAR, known by its French acronym, BONUCA, said in a statement, March 11.

The campaign will begin in the capital, Bangui, with a four-day training seminar for the CAR military that will address such themes as the republican and apolitical nature of the military, and the primacy of political power over military power; the role of the armed forces in the context of peace and confidence; international humanitarian standards and respect for human rights; peace as a prerequisite for foreign investment and sustainable human development.

[Background Info. Central African Republic, page 650:a]

b. EC to provide over US \$92m to fight poverty: The European Commission (EC) and the Central African Republic (CAR), Feb 27, signed a cooperation agreement in Bangui to fight poverty over the next five years.

A statement from the EC described the programme as "a new stage in relations between the CAR and the European Union [EU] in the framework of the partnership agreement signed in Cotonou [Benin, West Africa] on June 23, 2000 between the EU and the African, Caribbean and Pacific states".

The funds are targeted for meeting priority objectives such as fighting poverty, supporting the health sector, improving the road network throughout the country, and promoting good governance and the rule of law. Over the past 15 years, the EC has provided a total of 272 million euros (US \$235,519,360) to the CAR in support of its development. The latest agreement is part of a larger cooperation programme that began in 2000 and is effective until 2007.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

CHAD

a. Parliament passes amnesty Bill for rebels: Parliamentarians, Feb 26, passed a Bill granting a general amnesty to rebels of the Movement for Democracy and Justice in Chad (MDJT), the national radio reported.

There were 64 votes in favour, 21 abstentions and one against, Radiodiffusion Nationale Tchadienne reported.

The amnesty formed part of a peace agreement signed between the rebels and the government in the Libyan capital, Tripoli, on January 7. Other elements of the peace deal included an immediate ceasefire, and involvement of the MDJT in the government and other state institutions. Opposition parties have expressed concern over the delay in the implementation of the accord and have asked both parties to respect it, according to news reports. The MDJT, headed by Youssouf Togoimi, launched a rebellion in the Tibesti region of northern Chad in 1998. Togoimi had been defence minister in the government of President Idriss Deby, who seized power from Hissene Habre in 1990 and was elected head of state in 1996.

b. Belgian judge investigates Hissene Habre case: Belgian Judge Daniel Fransen arrived in Chad, Feb 26, to investigate a case which a group of Chadians have filed in a Belgian court against former President Hissene Habre, whom they accuse of human rights abuses.

Reed Brody, advocacy director of New York-based Human Rights Watch said, Feb 27, that Fransen would interview victims, witnesses, former members of Habre's special security force and other people to gather evidence. The accusers and international human rights watchdogs say Habre, who ruled Chad from 1982-1990, was responsible for 40,000 executions and the torture of some 200,000 people during his presidency.

The law allows courts in Belgium to try cases involving serious rights abuses, no matter where and by whom they were committed. The plaintiffs filed their case in Brussels after they had failed to get Habre to stand trial in Senegal, where he has lived since fleeing Chad in 1990.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

CONGO

a. UNHCR visits refugee camps: UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Ruud Lubbers, Feb 26, met officials of the Republic of Congo (ROC), and visited refugees living in remote north-east of the country.

Some 84,000 refugees, mainly from the Democratic Republic of the Congo's (DRC) northwestern Equateur Province, sought asylum along an 800-km stretch of the Oubangui river to escape renewed fighting between government forces and the rebel Movement de liberation du Congo (MLC), UNHCR said.

The civil war in the DRC had caused the death of some 2 million people, mainly from malnutrition and disease, and resulted in the flight of 300,000 to neighbouring countries, UNHCR said. The agency noted that most of the refugees in the ROC could only be reached through the Oubangui river, with many living in areas prone to flooding. Improved security conditions in the region had enhanced UNHCR's access to them, but food self-sufficiency remained hard to attain, the agency said.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

DJIBOUTI

a. UN team arrives to assess environmental damage: A UN team has arrived in Djibouti to assess the environmental and humanitarian situation at Djibouti port, where a toxic pesticide began leaking out of shipping containers in January, it was reported, March 6.

The Djibouti authorities, March 5, announced that the situation had been "brought under control". Environment minister Abdallah Abdillahi Miguil told a news conference that there had been a phased approach to try and contain the situation.

"The first phase is an emergency phase and it is almost over," he said. "The second phase, which has not yet begun, is linked to an appeal we issued to friendly countries, as well as international and regional organisations, to help us with the expertise and the finances to tackle the pollution."

The UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) announced in February that 10 shipping containers in Djibouti port were leaking a toxic pesticide - chromated copper arsenate - which was causing serious health and environmental problems. The pesticide is used primarily as a wood preservative and is carcinogenic. According to the FAO, over 200 tonnes of the chemical were shipped from Britain for onward delivery to the Ethiopian Power Corporation.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

ETHIOPIA

a. Last journalist imprisoned in the country is released: Reporters Without Borders (RSF) has expressed happiness at the release of Tamrat Zuma, director of publication of the weekly newspaper *Atkurot*.

Zuma was detained for nearly ten months in Kerchiele prison in Addis Ababa, it was reported, March 7.

"It is the first time since 1993 that a journalist is not in prison in Ethiopia. It is very good news but one must not forget that over thirty professionals working in the press are currently being taken to court and risk being imprisoned at any moment" explained Robert Minard, general secretary of RSF.

RSF has called for the Ethiopian authorities to modify the press law of 1992 which is particularly harsh.

"The government should also quickly take measures to allow the creation of private radio stations and television channels. The state monopoly over radio and television broadcasting prevents the institution of a real pluralism of news items", said Minard.

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

GAMBIA

a. Banjul urged to ratify Rome statute: As the process leading to the establishment of an International Criminal Court gathers pace, the government of The Gambia has been urged to ratify the Rome statute, it was reported, March 11.

According to a press release from the Amnesty office in Bakau "progress towards the establishment of the court has been much greater than expected and it is necessary that many governments demonstrate as much support by ratifying the statute for the initiative".

The Rome statute provides for the establishment of a permanent international criminal court to investigate and prosecute people suspected of heinous crimes against humanity, namely genocide and war crimes. Following its adoption,

Amnesty International launched a worldwide campaign for all governments to ratify it. The statute provides that sixty states must ratify it before the court can be established. Already fifty-five states excluding The Gambia have ratified it and there are high hopes that within the next four years the mandatory mark would have been reached before the court would be set up.

b. 'Blood diamond' suspects apprehended:

Two blood diamond suspects, a Sierra Leonean and Belgian nationals have been apprehended by The Gambia security, authoritative sources confirmed, March 8.

According to sources, the two were apprehended by the National Intelligence Agency (NIA) officials with large quantity of diamond gems, after a vigorous surveillance.

It was disclosed that the Sierra Leonean national flew into The Gambia to meet the Belgian national who collects the precious stones for onward shipping to overseas countries.

According to reports, the blood diamonds affair had become an issue in The Gambia in the wake of the UN panel of experts' report which featured a prominent Gambian national. The Gambia government has consistently denied the accusation.

c. Fire ravages Jammeh's Kanilai Park: A bush fire, which spiralled out of control, Feb 29, and raged for two days, ravaged much of President Jammeh's forest park killing animals and destroying trees.

The fire was so devastating that some of the animals had to be evacuated to a safe land corridor.

The fire was allegedly caused by two women preparing local herbs in Kanwally village. The two still reported to be at large, were preparing some Busesab used to mix with tobacco powder locally called Piris when the fire quickly spiralled out of control, spreading to a near-by bush despite valiant efforts by the two women to put it off. According to reports the fire ravaged everything on its path fiercely travelling at a high velocity.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

GHANA

a. WTO signs customs accord: The World Trade Organization (WTO) and Customs, Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS) of Ghana, March 4, signed an agreement on customs valuation and trade facilitation.

The agreement was signed by the WTO Consultant, Mrs. Rosenow who was in Ghana to update the knowledge of CEPS officers on the WTO agreement on valuation.

Deputy trade and industry minister Kwesi Osei Adjei said valuation has always been an essential component of all modern tariff systems. "Indeed valuation impacts heavily on the mobilization of tax revenue and trade facilitation."

Adjei said countries acceding to the WTO agreement have been requested to implement all articles relating to valuation. Ghana began implementing the agreement in April 2000.

He said in Ghana, concerns have been raised about revenue leakage through under-invoicing and presentation of fake invoices and there is concern that the system of valuation lends itself to abuses, thereby jeopardizing national revenue.

He said the major benefit to Ghana, however, has been the achievement of simplified customs procedures and expeditious clearance of goods.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

GUINEA

a. Mano River Union countries agree on border security: Ministers from Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone agreed, March 7, to revive their long-dormant economic grouping, the Mano River Union.

The ministers of foreign affairs, security, internal affairs, defence and justice ended their two-day meeting of the union's joint security committee, with a timetable to implement the security measures. They called for a committee of legal experts, chosen by the justice ministries, to meet in Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone, on March 13. That committee will develop mechanisms for handling dissidents threatening the three governments, and submit a list of suspected dissidents residing in each other's countries.

A technical committee of the joint security body was given the mandate to implement the first phase of the deployment of a joint border and security force along the common borders.

The Guinean and Liberian ministers of defence and security will meet in Conakry, the Guinean capital, March 25. The two countries have recently been blaming each other for supporting armed anti-government dissidents. Both have denied the claim and relations had deteriorated to a low ebb. The latest meetings are a sign that there could be a thaw.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

GUINEA BISSAU

a. President appoints new head of Supreme Court: Guinea-Bissau President Kumba Yala has appointed his own man to head the Supreme court flouting the constitution.

The Portuguese news agency Lusa reported that Antonio Sedja Man who was appointed president of the Supreme Court by presidential decree took office, March 6. It was at Man's inaugural ceremony that Yala announced the court would soon be able to elect its own officers, as guaranteed under the constitution.

The United Opposition, an umbrella of 10 parties, called Man's appointment a violation of the constitution, Lusa added. It reported that Man replaced another Yala appointee, Mario Lopes, who died in a Senegalese hospital two weeks ago.

Yala named Lopes as Supreme Court president in October 2001 after unilaterally dismissing and jailing the court's elected

president and vice president on allegations of corruption. The two former judges, recently released to await trial in Bissau, have denied the charges.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

KENYA

a. Court orders seeds firm to stay shut: A court, March 8, ordered a seeds manufacturing plant to remain closed until 300 tonnes of uncertified seeds are produced as evidence in a criminal case.

Nakuru chief magistrate Gladys Ndeda said once the seeds are produced as evidence in a case facing four employees of Oil Crop Development Limited, the factory could reopen and continue with its other businesses. Lawyer Gatu Magana for the company had applied that guards stationed at the factory be removed to allow it to continue with other operations including the packaging and sale of fertilisers.

She said the firm dealt in the sale of cereals, machinery and animal feed. The closure of the factory worth Sh650 million was effected on January 23 by police and four senior employees were arrested. Police impounded samples of the seeds and later arraigned the four, Anthony Muia Kioko, Simon Mwangi Mwema, John Maina and Peter Warote Nyaga before the court.

The four denied that they were processing uncertified seeds for sale. They also denied that they had stocked imported seeds from South Africa, namely Pannar, without certification from the Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service.

b. Thousands left homeless in Mombasa slum evictions: Close to 3,000 families were left homeless, Feb 27, as the clean-up of Mombasa moved from kiosks to slum dwellings.

A Municipal Council bulldozer flattened the popular Mworoto slums in Tudor and flattened 4,500 structures.

Other structures were set on fire by the demolition squad that arrived at the slums at around 11.00 am.

The Council's bulldozer descended on the structures and destroyed property worth millions of shillings as owners tried in vain to salvage their belongings.

The squad, which was fully backed by administration and a hired mob, which was armed with all sorts of crude weapons, prevented owners of the structures from salvaging their property.

The structures are built on steep land overlooking the Tudor Creek. The area is mainly occupied by members of up-country communities such as the Luo, Luhya, Kamba and the Kikuyu.

Simeon Mbuvi, a slum-dweller who has a family of nine, said he had lost nearly everything and had no option but to go back up-country.

"I do not have any relatives in Mombasa and all my property has been destroyed. This is unfair and painful," said Mbuvi who has stayed in the slum for 10 years.

Catherine Wanjiku, who managed to salvage only a hen and two chairs, said: "The government wants to turn us into beggars, I do not know where I will sleep with my two sons tonight."

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

LIBYA

a. Gaddafi slams Saudi peace plan: Libyan leader Moamer Gaddafi has spelled out three conditions for peace with Israel and slammed a Saudi offer to recognize Israel.

Gaddafi, March 2, also called on his country's General People's Congress, or parliament, to examine Libya's pullout from the 22-member Arab League for its failure to fully support the Palestinians.

"The recognition of Israel puts in concrete form an accomplished fact," Gaddafi told a rally in the northern city of Syrte to mark the 25th anniversary of the Libyan Arab Republic.

"We will recognize Israel on three conditions: the return of all Palestinian refugees, the removal of weapons of mass destruction from the entire region, particularly Israel, and holding free elections under the aegis of the United Nations," Gaddafi said.

Libya to take part in Arab summit: Gaddafi has confirmed his country will participate in the Arab League summit in Beirut, despite threatening to quit the 22-member pan-Arab organization.

Arab League secretary general Amr Mussa told reporters, March 3, Libya would take part in the summit set for March 27-28. Gaddafi, March 2, called on the General People's Congress or parliament, to consider pulling the country out of the Arab League for its alleged failure to fully support the Palestinians in their 17-month uprising against Israel.

(SOURCE: *Deccan Herald*, Bangalore)

MALAGASY

a. Opposition appoints Prime Minister: Opposition leader and self-declared President Marc Ravalomanana, Feb 26, named a prime minister and began choosing a cabinet.

Ravalomanana told journalists he had ordered Jacques Sylla, a former foreign minister and long-time opponent of President Didier Ratsiraka, to "form a government as quickly as possible".

Prime Minister Tantely Andrianarivo, who had been holed up in his home surrounded by Ravalomanana supporters, fled from his villa, Feb 26, under the protection of a dozen soldiers. The protesters, who erected a blockade around the villa, had been demanding the premier's resignation.

Ravalomanana's appointment of a parallel Prime Minister raised the stakes in the nation, which has been gripped by weeks of opposition protests and a crippling general strike over claims by Ravalomanana that he won the first round of presidential polls on December 16, 2001.

After Ravalomanana swore himself in as head of state at a ceremony attended by judges, religious officials and body guards, Feb 22, authorities declared the move illegal and imposed a state of emergency.

Despite international appeals, Ravalomanana has insisted he was robbed of his election victory and that officials rigged the December poll in favour of Ratsiraka. While protests in the capital have so far been peaceful, violence has broken out in the countryside.

Violence breaks out as rival camps clash: The authorities in Malagasy are reported to have imposed a night-time curfew in the capital, Antananarivo, with tension running high in the city after demonstrations turned ugly and violent, Feb 27.

After seven weeks of largely peaceful opposition protests, rival supporters of the incumbent and self-proclaimed Presidents clashed and fought pitched battles with stones, sticks and clubs on the streets of the capital.

The violence erupted when followers of President Didier Ratsiraka marched into Antananarivo, which largely backs the opposition leader and self-proclaimed President Marc Ravalomanana. He is also the mayor of the city. Ravalomanana's supporters challenged their rivals and running street battles ensued. Ever since the disputed December 16 presidential election, which Ravalomanana says was rigged by Ratsiraka and the government, opposition supporters have been organising daily demonstrations without challenge.

So the bid by Ratsiraka supporters to stage their own counter-protest enraged Ravalomanana's backers, who stormed a government ministry. Rioters were reported to have forced their way inside and destroyed portraits of Ratsiraka, after which his supporters, vastly outnumbered, retreated.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Malagasy, page 654:a]

MALAWI

a. Cholera kills 175 persons: More than 175 people have died of cholera in just one week in Malawi and the number is expected to rise because of a lack of drugs in hospitals, it was reported, March 4.

The water-borne disease has affected about 10,000 people countrywide, especially along the popular tourism attraction, Lake Malawi, since the onset of the rainy season in November 2001. The overall picture is likely to be grimmer, however, since the current figures are based on only 16 of the country's 27 administrative districts. Data from the 11 other districts are not available.

Chief health education officer Jonathan Nkhoma said initial reports indicate that as of February 28, 175 deaths were recorded. Lakeshore districts were worst hit, with Mngochi topping the number of cases with 1,547 cholera patients and 35

deaths. Another badly hit lakeshore district is Machinga where 24 people out 716 cholera patients have died.

Malawi's main cities have also been hit by cholera. Blantyre and the capital of Lilongwe have recorded 14 deaths each. Altogether 979 cases have been reported in Lilongwe and 1,139 cases in Blantyre.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MOROCCO

a. UN Security Council expresses concern over PoWs: Members of the UN Security Council, Feb 26, urged the Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el-Hamra and Rio de Oro (Polisario) to release all prisoners of war, council chairman Adolfo Aguilar Zinser said in a statement.

The statement came on the first day of a council meeting on Western Sahara, during which Hidi Annabi, assistant secretary general for peacekeeping operations, presented the UN Secretary-General's latest report on the former Spanish colony.

According to the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Polisario Front holds some 1,362 Moroccan prisoners, some of whom have spent over 26 years in detention. Morocco on the other hand has released all of its prisoners.

Members of the Security Council also urged Morocco and the Polisario Front "to avoid any action that can aggravate the situation" and "to ensure freedom of movement of United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO)".

Morocco annexed Western Sahara when Spain withdrew in 1975, prompting the Polisario Front to take up arms to fight for independence. The two sides signed a ceasefire in 1991, paving the way for the deployment of MINURSO. However, efforts to organise a referendum on the territory's future have failed thus far.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Morocco, page 644:b]

MOZAMBIQUE

a. Commonwealth Press Union flays Harare and Maputo governments: The governments of Zimbabwe and Mozambique have come in for sharp criticism for their repressive approach to the media in the latest edition of the Commonwealth Press Union's broadsheet, *CPU News*, it was reported, March 4.

The paper, which is distributed world-wide, led its 12-page February edition with a story highlighting increased attacks on reporters and media across the globe.

Thirty-seven journalists died in 2001, up from 24 in 2000, according to the New York-based Committee for the Protection of Journalists, which in the 1980s assisted South African journalists who were detained and harassed while reporting the anti-apartheid revolts. *CPU News* reported that about 500

journalists were arrested and 700 attacked in 2001. This was according to Paris-based lobby group, Reporters Sans Frontiers.

Reporters Sans Frontiers had said: "2001 was significantly more dangerous for media workers than the year before." While Nigeria's civilian government was patted on the back for reducing levels of harassment against the media, the sharp increase of media harassment in Mozambique and Zimbabwe was prominently reported on.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

NIGERIA

a. Senate dismisses sovereign national conference Bill: The Senate, March 7, dismissed a Bill seeking to convene a sovereign national conference to discuss a new constitution for the country.

The Bill, which was sponsored by Senator Femi Okunmu, (Ogun Central), was thrown out for lack of merit.

However, Okunmu immediately challenged the Senate verdict on the Bill, raising a point of order on the lack of validity of the decision due to the lack of quorum which eventually stalled the session of the Upper Chamber after a heated debate. Dismissing the Bill which was listed for a first reading after listening to objections from Senators, Deputy Senate President Ibrahim Mantu said the move was against the 1999 Constitution and was therefore thrown out.

(SOURCE: *Post Express*, Lagos)

RWANDA

a. Judges drop conspiracy charge against genocide suspect: Judges at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), March 6, dropped the charge of conspiracy to commit genocide against Samuel Imanishimwe, one of the three defendants in the so-called "Cyangugu Trial."

"The chamber does not find any direct indication that Imanishimwe conspired to commit genocide," Judge Lloyd Williams of St. Kitts and Nevis (presiding) ruled.

However, the prosecution said they would appeal against the ruling. Imanishimwe is a former commander of the Cyangugu military barracks. He is jointly tried with Andre Ntagerura, a former minister of transport and communication; and Emmanuel Bagambiki, former Cyangugu governor. All three have denied charges of genocide, conspiracy to commit genocide and crimes against humanity. The ruling was made at the beginning of the defence case. The prosecution closed its case in November 2001.

'Genocide suspect watched 2500 refugees being killed: Genocide suspect Joseph Kanyabashi watched a group of attackers surround and kill 2500 refugees in Kabakobwa, Butare Province, during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, a witness claimed before the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, March 6.

The witness -- identified only as "FAM" - was testifying mainly against Kanyabashi, a former mayor of Ngoma commune in Butare. Kanyabashi is one of the six defendants in the so-called "Butare Trial." FAM, the seventh prosecution witness since the trial began in June 2001, testified that the refugees gathered at Kabakobwa to escape attacks that began after unknown assailants shot down a plane carrying Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana on April 6, 1994. "Kanyabashi was standing by a vehicle observing the killings," the witness alleged, adding that he was one of the attackers. FAM is a detainee awaiting sentencing in Rwanda for his role in the genocide.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Rwanda, page 656:a]

SOMALIA

a. Three suspects held for murder of aid worker: Police in Mogadishu have arrested three men suspected of involvement in the murder of a Swiss aid worker in the town of Marka, a police spokesman, said, March 4.

Col Muhammad Yusuf Madale said the three suspects had been brought back to Mogadishu by investigators sent by the Transitional National Government to Marka. "We believe that one of those in custody is the gunman who pulled the trigger," he said.

He said police were still looking for another individual, who "could be the second gunman". Madale added that police were also continuing with their investigations and were "actively looking for other individuals who may have had a hand in the murder".

"Three senior CID officers are working round the clock to bring to book all those who were involved in this, directly or indirectly," he added. Seventy-year old Verena Karer, who arrived in Marka as a volunteer nurse in 1993, at the height of the famine in Somalia, was murdered by gunmen on February 22, in the compound of a secondary school she had built in 2001.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Somalia, page 667:a]

SOUTH AFRICA

a. Quit C' wealth, Mbeki tells 'white supremacists': The South African President, Thabo Mbeki, March 11, called on the "white supremacists" in the Commonwealth to leave the organization as their mindset was threatening the world body.

"The white supremacist mindset of viewing African failures as generic was threatening the Commonwealth", Mbeki said in his weekly column in the ruling ANC newsletter on the Internet following the recent CHOGM summit at Coolumberr in Australia.

Mbeki did not name any Commonwealth leaders but it was obvious he was referring to the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, who had called for strong action against the Zimbabwean President, Robert Mugabe.

He was referring to a statement by some Commonwealth leaders after the summit that the Zimbabwean President, Robert Mugabe, be given a grace period after CHOGM leaders failed to take determined action against him.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, New Delhi)

SUDAN

a. Anti-torture group expresses concern at amputations: The World Organisation Against Torture, March 12, expressed concern that the government of Sudan has resumed the punishment of amputation of limbs.

It said in a statement that it had received information from one of its partner organisations, the Sudanese Victims of Torture Group (SVTG), that 46-year-old Anthony James Ladou Wani had had his right hand amputated on January 24, after his conviction on charges of stealing motor-vehicle spares.

Wani was sentenced in May 2000 after a trial in which he had no legal representation, because he was unable to pay for it, and had been detained since in Kober prison, in the Sudanese capital, Khartoum, according to the Swiss-based organisation. It was alleged that Wani - a Christian member of the Kakwa tribe in southern Sudan - had not received a fair trial, that there had not been enough evidence to convict him, and that judicial procedures had not been followed properly, it added.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

UGANDA

a. Army to investigate Karamoja killings: The Ugandan army is to conduct an inquiry into the circumstances in which two people died and a pregnant woman miscarried in Kotido, after they were tortured by soldiers, it was reported, March 8.

The Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) launched the forcible disarmament campaign in the insecurity-prone Karamoja sub-region of northeastern Uganda following the expiry of a month's grace period which the government extended to the Karamojong community to voluntarily surrender illegally held weapons.

Uganda's newspapers reported, March 6, the deaths of the chairman of Kapedo sub-county in Kotido district and a prominent businessman, allegedly beaten up and tortured by Ugandan soldiers, who wrongly accused them of not surrendering their arms.

Ael Ark Lodou, an area MP, told news reporters in the Ugandan capital, Kampala, March 5, that the bodies of the two "prominent people" had been recovered on February 25, in Ugandan army trenches, according to the government-owned newspaper *New Vision*.

Lodou - who also claimed soldiers beat up a five-month pregnant woman, causing her to miscarry - said the army was

conducting the ongoing forcible disarmament exercise "contrary to presidential orders" to arrest those found with illegal arms after the February 15 deadline, the report added.

[Background Info. Uganda, page 539:a]

b. 550 women battered in Kampala: Over 550 women were battered by their spouses in Kampala in 2001, the officer in charge of Family Protection Unit, Hellen Alyek said, March 7.

A breakdown of the figures shows that there were 91 cases in January, February (52), March (9), April (112), May (40), June (63), July (70), August (8), Sept (50), October (26) November (11) while figures for December have not been compiled.

However, Alyek said that the figures do not represent the rate of domestic violence in the rest of the country.

The Monitor could not establish how many women were battered in 2001. Non-government organisations (NGOs) and human rights groups had varying figures on domestic violence.

A report released by the Federation of Uganda Women's Lawyers (FIDA-U) in June 2001 reported 202 cases of domestic violence in Kampala, Mbale and Arua. The latter had the highest with 94.

c. Commonwealth honours Museveni: The Commonwealth has given President Yoweri Museveni a special award in recognition of his personal leadership and strong commitment to the crusade against HIV/AIDS in Uganda and Africa.

Museveni, March 3, accepted the award from the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Dr Don McKinnon, at the ongoing four-day 2002 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Coolumb, Australia.

McKinnon paid glowing tribute to Museveni and described Uganda's anti-AIDS success story as "very impressive and commendable progress this nation has made against HIV/AIDS in Africa and the world."

Museveni is the only individual who has received the Commonwealth award for fighting HIV/AIDS. Other recipients have been institutions.

McKinnon presented the award to Museveni on behalf of the Commonwealth Foundation, the Commonwealth Business Council and the Commonwealth Secretariat.

(SOURCE: *New Vision*, Kampala)

ZIMBABWE

a. Thousands disenfranchised: The final day of campaigning in the presidential election in Zimbabwe ended, March 8.

Earlier, March 7, the Supreme Court ruled that tens of thousands of people were not eligible to vote.

The court ruled in favour of a government appeal that would ban those who hold dual citizenship from voting, disqualifying

many White and tens of thousands of Black farm workers from neighbouring countries.

In his last day of the campaign trail, the President, Robert Mugabe toured his ruling party's rural strongholds north of Harare.

Mugabe's opponent, Morgan Tsvangirai, spent the day visiting industrial districts in Harare, strongholds of his labour-backed opposition party, Movement for Democratic Change.

In their ruling issued, March 7, the Supreme Court granted an appeal by the state against an earlier decision by the High Court that permitted residents with a second foreign citizenship to vote.

Slow polling, long queues: Zimbabweans waited in long lines outside polling stations, March 10, while waiting to vote in the most competitive presidential elections in the nation's history.

Voting was going very slowly in the election that pits the President, Robert Mugabe, who has ruled the country for 22 years, against a trade unionist promising reform. At one polling station on the outskirts of Harare, between 800 and 1,000 people voted in 21½ hours. Following a campaign wracked by intense political violence and intimidation, which human rights groups blame on the ruling party, the opposition leader, Morgan Tsvangirai, said he was pleased to see so many people voting, but was worried about the pace.

"The intention, of course, is that you frustrate as many voters as you can. Mugabe is trying to move the goal posts to disenfranchise people, those people he thinks will vote against him," Tsvangirai said. He urged people to be patient, believing that a large turnout would favour him.

Lines were far longer than during parliamentary elections in June 2000, which Mugabe's party narrowly won.

Mugabe has been in power since independence in 1980 and has only in recent years faced significant dissent as the economy has collapsed. The number of polling stations in urban areas, considered opposition stringholds, were cut by half by the government. People were also uncertain about where to vote. Mugabe's name did not appear on the list at the polling station in the Harare township where he had planned to vote.

Shortly before he arrived, his advance team was informed of the gaffe and he was whisked to another station, where his name was listed. After casting his ballot, Mugabe lashed out at his critics, including the European Union, the former colonial power Britain and the United States that have imposed punitive restrictions on him to protest government-sanctioned violence and repressive legislation.

"They are supporters of the opposition," Mugabe said. "It is not only prejudice, it is bias against the (ruling party), bias against President Mugabe and bias in favour of the opposition".

In what appeared to be a show of force, witnesses in Harare reported unusually large number of soldiers and military vehicles around the capital. Government officials declined to comment on

the deployment. In the rural town of Chininga, 12 farmers were arrested and held on unspecified charges after helping election monitors reach polling stations, the Commercial Farmers Union said, March 9.

The election comes amid the country's worst economic crisis since independence. Inflation is over 110 per cent, unemployment is 60 per cent and hundreds of thousands of people are going hungry.

The few pre-election polls reveal voters' fears with one reporting that 70 per cent of the people questioned refused to say who they would vote for. "That's my secret, I can't tell you," Ronnie Dube, a 48 year-old carpenter, said when asked how he would vote. "I want to vote for a good future".

The election is the biggest challenge to Mugabe's Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front party since he led the country to independence.

Mugabe, 78, has promised public works initiatives if he is re-elected and has pledged to continue his controversial programme of seizing White-owned farms and giving them to landless Blacks. Whites make up less than one per cent of the country's population but own about a third of the nation's commercial farmland.

Mugabe has called Tsvangirai and his Movement for Democratic Change servants to White interests and Western powers who want to see the country fail.

Tsvangirai has promised to revive the economy, end corruption and promote a more orderly land reform system. He urged supporters, March 9, to vote despite government intimidation. "I know you are tired; I know you are scared and I know you are hungry. But have courage, people of Zimbabwe, the darkest hour is always before the dawn," Tsvangirai said in a statement.

Human Rights groups and many political analysts say the election already is too tainted to be free and fair.

Govt extends voting time: The government, March 11, agreed to an extension of voting in a landmark presidential elections for a third day in Harare and the satellite city of Chitungwiza.

Justice minister Patrick Chinamasa made the announcement on state radio, saying that extending the vote across the country, as ordered, March 10, by the High Court, would not be feasible.

The opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) had appealed for the extension after a weekend for chaotic voting in Harare that saw queues thousands of people long because of a massive turnout and a cutback in the number of polling stations.

Voting outlets were increased for rural voters, the main support base of President Robert Mugabe, who is struggling to retain his 22-year grip on power.

Tsvangirai charged with treason: Opposition leader Tsvangirai has been charged with treason on February 25.

The charge against Tsvangirai, who heads the opposition Movement for Democratic Change and two other party leaders, marks the latest twist in an election campaign fraught with violence mainly blamed on Mugabe supporters. Tsvangirai, who represents the biggest threat to Mugabe's grip on power, was released after two hours of questioning by police on alleged plans to assassinate the President ahead of the March 9-10 polls. Treason is punishable by death.

Meanwhile, South African observers railed against the police for not protecting opposition supporters from attacks by ruling party activists.

Asked about the treason charges, Richard Boucher, spokesman for the US State Department said: "This falls against a backdrop of a very well documented campaign of violence and intimidation against the opposition."

"We're aware of no convincing evidence that there's any basis for these allegations. It just appears to be another tragic example of President Mugabe's increasingly authoritarian rule, his government's apparent determination to intimidate and repress the opposition".

The Australian foreign minister, Alexander Downer, who is attending a meeting in Indonesia, said his country would ask the Commonwealth to withdraw election observers from Zimbabwe if Tsvangirai was arrested.

"If the leader of the opposition is prevented from participating in the elections, they're hardly going to be free and fair", he said.

In two recent incidents election monitors were themselves the targets of violence by Mugabe loyalists.

Tsvangirai said police told him he would be summoned to appear in court at an unspecified later date. A police spokesman, Wayne Bvudzijenja, confirmed treason charges had been made, but would give no further details.

Tsvangirai said he was freed with no restrictions on his movements and would continue with his election campaign. He said he was formally charged with a plot to kill Mugabe along with two senior party colleagues, the secretary-general, Welshman Ncube and the shadow agriculture minister, Renson Gasela.

"Of course, I denied it completely. The timing is obvious. This was all along part of the ZANU-PF (ruling party) strategy to eliminate me from the race," Tsvangirai said. Ncube and Gasela have not yet been questioned by the police.

Tsvangirai described the allegations as "political drama of the highest order" by Mugabe and the State media.

Mugabe said recently that he would not have Tsvangirai arrested before the elections despite allegations of the assassination plot. The government claims Tsvangirai met members of a Montreal-based political consulting firm in 2001 to arrange for the "elimination" of Mugabe.

Ten days ago, the firm released a secretly recorded videotape of a December 4 meeting in Montreal which they said incriminated Tsvangirai.

Tsvangirai fears for life: Tsvangirai told his supporters, March 11, that if anything happened to him they should carry on the struggle against President Robert Mugabe.

Speaking shortly after the arrest of a top lieutenant, Tsvangirai signalled that he believed his life was at risk.

He told his Movement for Democratic Change followers to stay calm despite signs that Mugabe's ruling party was stealing Zimbabwe's presidential election.

"President Mugabe and his colleagues are afraid of the people and we have heard they may do anything to kill the messenger," Tsvangirai said in a statement. "They may want to arrest me and at worst kill me but they will never destroy the spirit of the people to reclaim their power," he said as thousands of MDC followers queued for a third consecutive day in Harare trying to cast their votes.

The run-up to the election was marred by political violence in which independent monitors say 33 people have died, most of them from the opposition.

"Zimbabweans must never be provoked into confrontation with this rabid regime," he told a crowded news conference after reading his statement.

Later, Tsvangirai briefed foreign election observers on the Movement for Democratic Change's detailed allegations of wholesale rigging by the ruling ZANU-PF.

US diplomats detained: The US embassy in Harare said four American diplomats, two of them electoral observers, were detained at a police road block, March 11.

Meanwhile, Zimbabwe's election went into an unscheduled third day, March 11. President Robert Mugabe, defying a court order, blocked urban voting for hours and refused to open polls outside the capital.

Opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai, who, March 10, won a High Court extension of the poll because of delays, said Mugabe was trying to steal the election and "multitudes of potential voters are being disenfranchised".

Tsvangirai said Mugabe was systematically using violence and cheating to cling on to power in the once prosperous nation, which faces an economic and political collapse that would contaminate neighbouring countries including regional giant South Africa.

British PM told to go to hell: Mugabe has accused Britain's Premier Tony Blair of endorsing opposition rival Morgan Tsvangirai in the election, saying the country's former colonial rulers can "go to hell".

Mugabe's latest volley against Britain came on the eve of a weekend Commonwealth summit where Blair was expected to call for immediate sanctions against Harare in response to government intimidation ahead of the March 9-10 presidential

poll. The Zimbabwean President, quoted the official *Herald* newspaper, March 1, told a rally in Guruve in northern Zimbabwe, Feb 28, that Blair had shown his bias towards the opposition in comments to the British Parliament.

b. C'wealth rejects UK call to suspend Zimbabwe: Commonwealth leaders, March 4, rejected a British-led call to suspend Zimbabwe before the presidential election scheduled for March 9 and 10.

Commonwealth warned President Robert Mugabe that he could face punitive action if the vote was rigged.

In a compromise deal after three days of talks which split the Commonwealth summit along racial lines, the leaders formed a three-nation task force empowered to impose penalties ranging from "collective disapproval to suspension" from the Commonwealth.

Britain, Zimbabwe's former colonial master, said it was disappointed that the group had once again failed to punish Mugabe for his campaign of political violence but African leaders insisted it would be wrong to act before the vote.

Mugabe's opponents in the March 9-10 elections dismissed the Commonwealth measures, warning Mugabe would unleash a "bloodbath" before the group was ready to act.

"We are not happy because it is more talk and no action. It gives Mugabe more time to increase his campaign of violence in the next five days," spokeswoman Sekai Holland from Zimbabwe's Movement for Democratic Change told reporters at the summit.

The MDC, which has presented Mugabe with his toughest challenge since taking power at independence in 1980, says at least 107 of its supporters and activists have been killed in the last two years.

Australian Prime Minister John Howard, hosting the March 2-5 summit on Australia's tropical eastern coast, denied the deal was a weak reaction by the Commonwealth, which prides itself on being a guardian of democracy and law.

He said it was a "bona fide" way of overcoming deep divisions which split the Commonwealth on White-Black lines. "I think this is a credible outcome for the Commonwealth", Howard said.

Britain, Australia and New Zealand had demanded Zimbabwe be suspended from the Commonwealth. But their efforts were defeated by African states who make up a third of the group.

"We have postponed the day of judgment in a sense on Zimbabwe and I think that was the wrong thing to do, we should have taken action now," British Prime Minister Tony Blair said.

"But we have at least the possibility of a mechanism in place to suspend Zimbabwe, to take really tough action, if Mugabe ends up the victor in a rigged election through violence and intimidation," he said. Mugabe, who stayed away from the summit, has told Blair to "go to hell".

Commonwealth adopts anti-terrorism law: Commonwealth leaders agreed at their summit, March 2, to expel any member state that aided, financed or harboured terrorists.

In the first major announcement of their four-day meeting held in Australia, the leaders said they had agreed on a "terrorist action plan" under which members would also act to stop abuse of financial systems and freeze and confiscate the assets of terrorists.

They also called for the promotion of democracy, but showed no sign of taking any action against Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe over allegations that he is intimidating voters and rigging the result ahead of a March 9-10 presidential election.

Commonwealth leaders refused to re-admit Pakistan, suspended from the 54-nation body after the 1999 military coup, officials said. In 1999, the Commonwealth suspended Pakistan after a military coup by Gen Pervez Musharraf.

Fiji has twice been suspended after racially-inspired coups in 1987 and 2000, but was welcomed back into the Commonwealth at the summit following elections in 2001.

"The Commonwealth is not a police force," one southern African leader said, adding it would be premature even to consider what action to take until the Zimbabwe elections were over.

The European Union has already imposed sanctions on Mugabe's inner circle and withdrawn its election observers after Zimbabwe refused to accredit their head.

Opening the summit with Commonwealth head Queen Elizabeth, secretary general Don McKinnon called on the rich nations to adopt more humane globalisation policies.

c. Swiss banks to freeze Mugabe accounts: Switzerland is prepared to freeze accounts totalling 55 million pounds (\$82.5 m) tied to Robert Mugabe and top cabinet ministers, it was reported, March 4.

The action would be taken depending on the outcome of the March 9-10 election, in which Mugabe is fighting for his political survival after 22 years in power, *The Standard* newspaper said.

The paper quoted a senior Swiss government official as saying: "The cabinet agreed it would be appropriate to impose sanctions after the polls as a way of dealing with Mugabe and (the ruling) ZANU-PF who are sure to rig the elections and cling on to power".

Swiss foreign ministry spokeswoman Daniela Stoffel-Fatzer told the paper that the cabinet decision would have to be ratified by parliament, and that the government would convey its decision to Zimbabwe's ambassador in Bern.

(SOURCE: *Telegraph*, Calcutta, *Deccan Herald*, Bangalore, Bangalore, *Asian Age*, New Delhi, *Hindu*, Madras and *Independent*, Harare)

[Background Info. Zimbabwe, page 670:a]

ANALYSIS

Savimbi death rekindles peace hopes

The death of Angolan rebel leader Jonas Savimbi, who helped drag out one of Africa's longest-running civil wars, has rekindled hopes for peace in a country ravaged by decades of conflict, analysts said.

But they warned against celebrating until there are concrete assurances that Savimbi's National Union for the Total Independence of Angola, known by the Portuguese acronym UNITA, is ready to lay down its arms. Hopes for lasting stability in the southwest African nation have been raised and dashed repeatedly. The Angolan government said recently that Savimbi had died in a clash with army troops in the country's southeastern province of Moxico. Portuguese state television showed pictures of what it said was the corpse of the 67-year-old rebel, and its correspondent reported that he had been hit by 15 bullets.

But there was no official reaction from UNITA. Foreign news agencies in the Angolan capital, Luanda, reported that news of Savimbi's death was greeted with jubilant celebrations there.

The demise of the veteran guerilla leader, who was loved for his intellect and charm and despised for his calculated brutality, could herald a radical political, economic and social transformation in Angola.

"I don't see any downsides (to Savimbi's death)," said John Stremlau, head of the department of international relations at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg. "I hesitate to say this...but it can only be a good thing". Angola has known little but conflict since it gained independence from Portugal in 1975. That was when Savimbi, who saw himself as the champion of the country's disenfranchised black majority, took up arms against government troops affiliated with the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, or MPLA.

That group was led by Dr Agostinho Neto, who was succeeded by a then little-known Jose Eduardo dos Santos, Savimbi's longtime rival and Angola's current President. Subsequently, each of several shaky peace deals that brought a respite from the fighting ultimately unraveled.

At least 500,000 people have been killed in the conflict—some estimate put the figure at 1 million—while about 4 million Angolans, roughly one-third of the population, have been displaced. An estimated 100,000 people have had limbs amputated after landmine injuries. Angola's huge wealth from oil and diamond reserves have been of little benefit to the common man. More than 75 per cent live in poverty.

Several UNITA generals also were reported killed in the Feb 22 battle. But the whereabouts of Savimbi's two most senior aides, vice president Antonio Dembo and secretary-general Paulo Lukamba were unknown.

Analysts said it was unlikely that UNITA would disband immediately, but the death of its leader dealt a serious blow to the battlehardened guerilla force. "UNITA was Savimbi, and it has definitely been deteriorating for quite a while," said Judith

Matloff, a US journalist and author of a book on the Angolan conflict. But regional political observers warned that UNITA's troops, which at one stage were estimated about 60,000, remain a force to be reckoned with and still could wreak havoc in southern Africa.

"Like Savimbi, UNITA has been declared dead a number of times as well," said Jakkie Cilliers, director of the South Africa-based thinktank, the Institute for Security Studies.

"Because UNITA operates in the bush, the general tendency is to underestimate it. These guys have been in the bush for a long time. They know nothing but war". Decades of conflict have made ordinary Angolans weary, and few seem likely to show support for a rebel group still bent on fighting". "Undoubtedly the war is over," said a former US official who knew Savimbi.

"UNITA was Savimbi and Savimbi was UNITA. But the principles for which Savimbi originally fought will live on for generations. The struggle will continue in the political arena for years to come. There may be some who choose to labour on in the bush, but they will find no support".

A simple lack of funds might force UNITA to give up fighting in the absence of its leader. The group's income from diamond sales reportedly has declined significantly, especially next to the government's from oil. United Nations arms sanctions against UNITA also have weakened its position. It is not yet clear whether anyone from UNITA's ranks could replace Savimbi, who had ruled the group ruthlessly since he founded it to battle the Portuguese colonial administration.

"The leadership struggle is the important thing to watch for now," Cilliers said. "The danger is UNITA could faction and split".

Indeed, contention could arise among various groups of UNITA supporters loyal to different leaders. The MPLA could end up trying to negotiate with splinter groups, as opposed to one united force. Analysts also expressed the hope that the death of Savimbi might help usher in peace throughout southern Africa, where many countries neighbouring Angola have been directly or indirectly sucked into its war.

Namibia was drawn in at the end of 1999, when it allowed dos Santos' army to launch attacks on UNITA from Namibian soil. Savimbi's force retaliated by slaying scores of Namibian civilians. And Zambia has been forced to play host to thousands of Angolan refugees who have fled their country, placing an added burden on Zambia's infrastructure and sometimes attracting the wrath of the warring Angolan parties.

In recent years, moreover, Angolan government troops and rebels have become embroiled in internal conflicts in Congo and the adjacent Republic of Congo. Savimbi's death could change the dynamics of many regional power struggles for the better, analysts said.

—Ann M Simmons in *Los Angeles Times/Deccan Herald*, Bangalore,

African Chronicle

A fortnightly record on governance, economy, development, human rights and environment

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ALGERIA

a. Anniversary of Evian accords: Algeria, March 19, observed the signing of the Evian accords between the French army and the Algerian-nationalist movement which paved the way for independence, 40 years ago.

The war, in which an estimated two million people were killed, has haunted Algerian-French relations ever since. While the ruling Algerian elite has been increasingly seen as using its anti-colonial legitimacy to cling on to power, France has been under mounting pressure to recognise, and even apologise for the excesses of the French army at the time.

The anniversary of the Evian accords comes at a time when violence in Algeria is on the increase after a lull in the civil war which has claimed more than 100,000 lives since 1991 when the government cancelled elections which the Islamic Salvation Front was poised to win.

b. Bouteflika agrees to demands on Berber language: President Abdelaziz Bouteflika has announced his decision to make Berber a national language, finally yielding to months of protest by Kabylie pressure groups, it was reported, March 13.

But in an address to the nation, he refused to grant another key demand, saying it was "inconceivable" that he would pull the paramilitary gendarmes back from the Berber region of Kabylie. The speech was delivered on the occasion of a meeting between Bouteflika and Kabylie representatives on how to address Berber demands for better social and political conditions in Kabylie and other parts of the country. The region has been in turmoil since a young Kabyle was killed in detention in 2001.

During his hour-long speech at the Club des Pins convention centre in the capital, Algiers, President Abdelaziz Bouteflika told delegates of the Kabylie "Citizens Movement" that the Berber language, Tamazight, would, in future, be recognised as a national language by the Constitution, which says that Arabic is the country's official language. The move, he added, "is part of the spirit of consolidation of the comprehensive process that aims to restore a unique national identity."

(SOURCE: *Le Matin*, Algiers)

[Background Info. Algeria, page 541:b]

ANGOLA

a. Accord with rebels to end war: Ravaged by almost three decades of war, peace was on the horizon in Angola, March 16, after the government and rebels agreed to end hostilities.

The breakthrough came less than three weeks after the battlefield death of UNITA rebel leader Jonas Savimbi, who launched the rebellion in 1975 and had been considered the key obstacle to peace in the country.

His National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) and military officials, meeting, March 15, in Moxico, the eastern province where Savimbi was killed, agreed to end hostilities and work towards a "definitive ceasefire."

The two sides issued a joint statement saying they would revive a peace accord that has been a dead letter practically ever since it was signed in the Zambian capital Lusaka in 1994.

"Peace has arrived, I think peace has arrived," the army's deputy chief of staff, General Geraldo Sachipengo Nunda, said over Portuguese state radio, March 16.

"The debates were heated because we have been fighting for years, but when the will for peace was expressed ... eventually the discussions, things became easier and all the problems were discussed in a very cordial atmosphere," he said.

(SOURCE: *Times of Zambia*, Lusaka)

[Background Info. Angola, page 673:b]

BOTSWANA

a. Inonge appointed envoy: President Mwanawasa has appointed Dr Inonge Mbikusita-Lewanika as ambassador to undertake special assignments related to the Organisation of African Unity, it was reported, March 18.

Presidential aide Arthur Yoyo said in a statement, March 17, that Dr Mbikusita-Lewanika would perform the duties of a special envoy on missions on behalf of the President. President Mwanawasa also appointed former finance deputy minister in the previous administration, Godfrey Simasiku, as the new ambassador to Japan.

Former agriculture deputy minister Enock Chikamba is the new high commissioner to Kenya while former Central Province deputy minister Cecil Holmes has been appointed to head the Zambian High Commission in Botswana.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BURKINA FASO

a. EU gives US \$310.8 million for anti-poverty programme: The European Union, March 22, announced it would give Burkina Faso the local equivalent of US \$310.8 million to support the government's anti-poverty drive.

"The EU wants to reiterate its commitment to back the Burkina Faso people's efforts to alleviate poverty," Antonio

Velasquez, the EU representative, said. The aid accord, signed, March 21, in Ouagadougou, the Burkinabe capital, will be ploughed into rural development and food security, basic education, health, economic reforms and roads building. These are sectors earmarked for action in the government's Strategic Paper for Poverty Reduction.

The money is being drawn from the European Development Fund that supports development in the African, Caribbean and Pacific group of countries that have special trade relations with the European Union.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

CAMEROON

a. Priest arrested in Yaounde at ICTR's behest: A former Rwandan priest, Hormisdas Nsengimana, was arrested by the police in Yaounde, March 21, on the basis of an arrest warrant submitted by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR).

A statement from ICTR said Nsengimana, a former priest and Rector of Christ-Roi College in Nyanza, Nyabisundi commune, in the southern Butare prefecture of Rwanda, is charged with genocide, conspiracy to commit genocide and crimes against humanity for murder and extermination.

Nsengimana is alleged to have played a leading role in a group of killers called Les Dragons (or Escadron de la mort), a group which reportedly played a crucial role in the killing of Tutsis in Butare prefecture, the statement said.

Meanwhile, a former organiser of the youth movement in Ngoma commune, Butare prefecture, Joseph Nzabirinda, was, March 20, transferred to the United Nations Detention Facility in Arusha, northern Tanzania, from Brussels, Belgium.

He was arrested on December 21, 2001 on the basis of an arrest warrant issued by the Tribunal, the ICTR statement said.

b. Thousands arrested in Yaounde: Police have arrested close to 3,000 suspected criminals in a two-week crackdown in and around Yaounde, authorities said, March 21.

The arrests follow a sharp rise in burglary, car theft and assault in the city, national security chief Pierre Minlo Medjo said in a statement. Armed police, paramilitary gendarmes and soldiers combed the city after dark during the operation, seizing guns, machetes and knives as well as a considerable quantity of drugs, the statement said. Those arrested include ten wanted men who had escaped from jail.

They also include 10 foreigners - there was no word on their nationalities, who were in the country illegally. Two similar police crackdowns in recent years in Yaounde and the port town of Douala have been criticised by the public, as well as by foreign and local human rights groups, for being excessively brutal. Police have been accused of carrying out torture and killings.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

COMORO ISLANDS

a. Voters reject new constitution in Grande Comore: The reconciliation process in the Comoros was dealt a blow, March 21, when 59 per cent of voters on the main island of Grande Comore rejected a new local constitution.

Analysts are hoping that the latest setback in an archipelago that has seen more than twenty coups since 1975, will not trigger another political crisis.

"The rejection of the constitution is not necessarily the nail in the coffin for the reconciliation process but instead a sign of the growing pains most countries experience on the road to peace and stability," Michel Davis, director of the South African-based Africa/Asia Foundation said.

Davis added that the rejection of the constitution by referendum is likely to lead to a delay in presidential elections scheduled for the end of March. "Let's hope that the delay of the presidential elections is the only consequence of the rejection of the constitution. However, events in the Comoros have often overtaken predictions and so we will have to wait and see," said Davis.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Comoro Islands, page 638:a]

CONGO (DR)

a. Rebels to stay put in captured town: Congolese rebels who captured an eastern town, throwing peace talks into turmoil said, March 17, they would not move "one centimetre" from the town.

"We will continue to hold our current positions," said Major-General Sylvain Buki, chief of staff of the Rwandan-backed Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD).

"We are staying here. We are not moving one centimetre".

France has accused the rebels' Rwandan backers of sending 10,000 troops against the small settlement on the southwestern shores of Lake Tanganyika in the first major ceasefire violation for a year.

Rwanda, which supports the RCD rebels and is the biggest military player in the many-sided conflict, has denied its troops were involved in the capture of Moliro, March 16.

The latest fighting threatened to derail peace talks in Sun City, South Africa, aimed at ending three years of war that has claimed an estimated two million lives, mainly through spreading hunger and disease in Africa's worst humanitarian catastrophe.

(SOURCE: *Deccan Herald*, Bangalore)

DJIBOUTI

a. Over US \$7 million for poverty reduction: The Abidjan-based African Development Bank (ADB) has signed a number of agreements with Djibouti aimed at poverty reduction and improving the situation of women, it was reported, March 15.

According to an ADB press release, two loan and two grant agreements were signed amounting to a total of US \$7.22 million.

A structural adjustment loan will help reduce poverty through the promotion of good governance, improving the legal framework for business, and the greater participation of civil society in development. The second loan is aimed at boosting the fishing sector by increasing fish production and reducing Djibouti's food dependence on the outside world.

The first grant will finance an institutional capacity building project for the "good governance of public finances". The second grant will fund a project to improve the condition of women and thus "enable them to make a better contribution to the country's development". To this end, the project will strengthen the ability of government departments, civil society organisations and the media to prepare and promote women's advocacy programmes.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

EGYPT

a. Mubarak's assurance to Cheney on Iraq: President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt said, March 13, he would press Saddam Hussein to re-admit UN weapons inspectors.

Mubarak said he had already received indications that Baghdad would agree.

"We'll try hard with Saddam Hussein to accept the UN inspectors to go there, and we are going to meet with some of his special envoys and tell them that this is a must". Mubarak said at press conference with US Vice-President Dick Cheney.

"My knowledge is that he's going to accept the inspectors," he added. The statement by the Egyptian leader reflects anxiety among Arabs leaders about the Bush administration's determination to confront Iraq.

b. 'Pilot crashed EgyptAir jet': The co-pilot of EgyptAir Flight 990, which crashed off New England killing 217 people in 1999, brought the plane down as an act of revenge after being told that he would be no longer allowed to fly on transatlantic route.

The former EgyptAir Captain Taha Mahmoud Hamdy, one of about 50 EgyptAir crew members summoned to a meeting in Cairo after the crash, said the plane was deliberately put into a nosedive by Gamil al-Batouti after he had been reprimanded for sexual misconduct that embarrassed the company, it was reported, March 18.

Captain Hamdy said that Batouti had been told just before the New York to Cairo flight took off that he would no longer be allowed to fly the lucrative and prestigious transatlantic routes because of a series of allegations which included exposing himself to teenage girls and making sexual advance to hotel maids and guests.

Captain Hatem Rushdy, the chief of EgyptAir's 767 groups who was a passenger on the flight that day, had told Batouti before take-off: "This is your last flight", Captain Hamdy said.

"Batouti's attitude was, 'This is the last flight for you, too'".

(SOURCE: *Telegraph*, Calcutta and *Asian Age*, New Delhi)

ERITREA

a. UN mission extended by six months: The UN Security Council has unanimously agreed to extend the mandate of the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) by another six months, it was reported, March 18.

The decision, adopted in Resolution 1398, March 15, follows a recommendation by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan who stressed that the mandate should be extended to support implementation of a decision on border demarcation between Ethiopia and Eritrea. The ruling will be announced in April in The Hague by an independent Boundary Commission.

The resolution approved prolonging the mandate until September 15, expressed "satisfaction and anticipation" that a final legal settlement of the border issue was about to be reached. It urged both countries to cooperate "fully and expeditiously" with UNMEE, a UN statement said.

The Council also asked the Secretary-General to come up with recommendations on how UNMEE could play a role in the border demarcation process.

Ethiopia and Eritrea went to war over a border dispute in May 1998. A peace agreement was finally signed in Algiers in December 2000 and the Boundary Commission will issue a "final and binding" verdict on where the border lies on April 13.

[Background Info. Eritrea, page 664:a]

b. Khartoum's "baseless charges" denied: Eritrea, March 22, denied "baseless charges" by Sudanese officials claiming Sudanese rebel forces were mobilising within Eritrea near the common border, it was reported, March 22.

An Eritrean official, quoted by the official Shaebia website, said there was a "complete absence of the Sudanese opposition militarily in Eritrea".

"The Sudanese officials know this more than anybody else," he added. "It would be better for the Sudanese government to resolve its political problems instead of resorting to such baseless accusations against others."

Other Eritrean sources said the Sudanese government "knows the SPLA has bases in eastern Sudan, so why should they be in Eritrea". "Maybe they [Sudanese authorities] are afraid of an imminent SPLA offensive in the east," the sources added.

The accusations were reportedly made by the governor of Sudan's Red Sea State, Hatim al-Sheikh al-Sammani, in the Sudanese newspaper *Al-Akhbar Al-Youm*.

(SOURCE: *Monitor*, Kampala)

GAMBIA

a. Bola Carrol appointed to genocide court: Bola Carrol, president of The Gambia Bar Association, has been appointed to sit in the Rwandan genocide court in Uganda, it was reported, March 22.

Bola Carrol who has made it clear that he was not going to seek re-election to the Bar, was appointed recently as the Rwandan genocide court judge to determine who were the perpetrators and victims of the genocide in Rwanda in the mid-1990s.

b. Gambia gets new Chief Justice: Muhammed Arif, a Pakistani born judge, March 19, arrived in The Gambia as the country's new Chief Justice, judicial sources said, March 22.

Justice Muhammed Arif replaces the Ghanaian born judge, Felix M Lartey who left The Gambia in February after serving as the Chief Justice for over two years. Sources revealed that the arrival of Justice Muhammed Arif would help to facilitate the administration of justice in the country as there have been a backlog of cases which needed to be assigned to the judges by the chief justice.

c. University council dissolved: Sources within the University of The Gambia have told *Daily Observer* that the university governing council has been dissolved.

No reasons for the move have been advanced, it was reported, March 20. It was also said that the staff of the university complained about poor conditions of service and the university council asked the staff to meet and draw up a recommendation for 'refined conditions' of service, concerning payment of salary, and allowances. A proposal was said to be submitted to the Department of State for Education by the staff body but was yet to get approval. Among other issues disclosed was the sudden removal of the former chief accountant of the university, Wilfred Davies.

Reliable sources said that a new man was appointed without shedding light on why the former chief accountant was removed. Sources said although nobody seemed to know why such an incident took place, there had been rumours of the accountant's involvement in impropriety.

(SOURCE: *Daily Observer*, Banjul)

GHANA

a. Air Force helicopter disappears: A Ghana Airforce helicopter with about seven people on board which was dispatched to Nkawkaw, March 16, on an emergency operation has not returned to the Air Force base.

Ghana Armed Forces spokesmen have dismissed claims that the helicopter has crashed saying that they have no evidence to support the claim. The Armed Forces have not ruled out the possibility of a crash.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

KENYA

a. Police arrest seven doomsday cult members: At least seven members of a doomsday cult who had locked themselves in a secluded den for two weeks in Bahati division, Nakuru district, were arrested, March 20.

Local deputy police boss, John Katumo, said the culprits include four women and three men. He said the members of Emmanuel Church had sold their property and withdrawn their children from school in readiness for "Christ's comeback" on April 24.

Katumo said the suspects had written letters to relatives asking them to bid farewell as they were "on their way to Heaven". He said relatives informed police who launched a manhunt for the cult members.

"The suspects are being held at Bahati Police Station and are assisting us with investigations which will lead to the arrest of their leaders," Katumo said.

The arrest comes barely a week after another 11 members of the same cult, who had locked themselves in a secluded house in Elburgon, were nabbed by police.

200 Mungiki members arrested in Kajiado: Over 200 members of the controversial Mungiki sect were arrested in Kajiado, district commissioner John Abduba said, March 19.

And several crude weapons including simis and arrows were recovered during the police raid into the Mungiki hide-out.

Abduba said the sect members were preparing to attack a specific community in Ongata Rongai town and the security team, acting on a tip-off from members of the public arrested the members.

b. Trade deal with Greece: Plans are underway to conclude a trade agreement between Kenya and Greece, tourism and information minister Kalonzo Musyoka said, March 24.

This is to actualise the agreement on Economic and Technical Co-operation signed by the two countries on November 16, 1998, the minister said.

The minister said Greece has great interest in enhancing trading relations with Kenya.

Speaking during the Greece National Day celebrations at the Inter-Continental Hotel, Musyoka acknowledged the contribution made by Greece to various projects in health, education and tourism sectors.

He thanked a Greek non-governmental organisation, Hellenas, for financing a number of projects in Embu District and urged more NGOs to copy its example.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

LIBERIA

a. Thousands still need food, shelter: Humanitarian officials said, March 22, that 4,202 Liberians who recently arrived at the Sinje refugee camp in the west of the country, still needed regular food aid and shelter after fleeing gunfire at Lofa Bridge.

"They've not been able to get major humanitarian assistance since arriving" between February 28 and March 18, a humanitarian official said. In addition, the source said, departing Sierra Leonean refugees, who had previously occupied the camp, took tarpaulins with them on their return home.

However, the official said that the most vulnerable among the internally displaced persons (the elderly and children below four years), had received help from Action Contre la Faim Action against Hunger ICRC has been providing curative health care. The new arrivals joined some 4,000 other Liberians who had earlier fled what they presumed to be fighting between government troops and dissidents.

The BBC reported, March 19, that "thousands of local people" had been emerging from the bush in Gbarpolu County as government troops engaged rebels in the area. Humanitarian agencies met in Monrovia, March 21, to review the new case load at Sinje and verify the numbers, one official said. The population at Sinje is unstable, the source added, "because some IDPs use the camp as a transit stop to Sierra Leone, as refugees".

b. Journalists attacked near Freetown: Liberian journalists returning from a Mano River peace building meeting in Conakry, Guinea, were attacked, March 19, at the Lungi Airport, outside Freetown in Sierra Leone.

Press Union of Liberia vice president Terrence Sesay, New National's Ansu Konneh and DC-TV's Gibson Jerue were pushed around and assaulted as they protested the initial refusal by the management of the Sierra Leone-based West Coast Airlines to take responsibility for their missed flight to Monrovia on Weasua Airlines.

A PUL release said West Coast had delayed the journalists' flight from Conakry by more than two hours, causing them to miss their connecting flight to Monrovia.

The Liberian journalists, aided by their Sierra Leonean counterparts, blocked the next West Coast flight from leaving the airport, until airport authorities intervened and reached an understanding with the journalists.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

LIBYA

a. Lockerbie convict starts term in Glasgow: Former Libyan agent Abdel Basset al Megrahi began life in a Scottish jail, March 15, after a special court refused to overturn his conviction in the 1988 bombing of Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie.

A special court sitting in the Netherlands but under Scottish laws sentenced Megrahi to life in January 2001 for blowing up the New York-bound airliner, killing 259 mostly American passengers and crew and 11 people on the ground.

He was flown by helicopter from the court to a Glasgow jail. Megrahi, 49, started his prison term of at least 20 years in the city's tough Barlinnie Prison, where ex-inmates say a special cell dubbed "Gaddafi's café" awaits.

It will be a significant change for a man who has spent three years in the purpose built prison in Camp Zeist. For the past year, since the acquittal of his co-accused Al Amin Khalifa Fahima, he has been the sole prisoner. Barlinnie, Scotland's toughest jail, is known for a strict, no non-sense regime.

Built in 1880 to house prisoners mostly serving up to four years behind bars, Barlinnie has suffered from persistent overcrowding and a depressing reputation.

Libya slams verdict: Libya, March 14, attacked the upholding of a life sentence on a Libyan agent for the 1988 Lockerbie plane bombing, saying the court handed down a "political verdict" under US and British pressure.

"The appeal court handed down a political verdict imposed by certain parties....and ignored the new evidence submitted by the defence," said the Libyan foreign ministry. The ministry said it was "absolutely convinced" of the innocence of Abdel Basset Ali al-Megrahi. "This shows once again that the United States and Britain threw in their weight to secure a political verdict", it added.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, Madras and *Asian Age*, New Delhi)

[Background Info. Libya, page 641:a]

MOROCCO

a. King's wedding a sign of hope for women: The marriage of Morocco's King Mohammed, March 31, may bring a glimmer of hope for women in what is still a highly male-dominated Muslim country.

The king, 39, was officially married to Ms Salma Bennani, a 24-year-old computer engineer, in a private royal ceremony.

Political analysts say the way the marriage has been carried out could be a hint that women may have more say in the domestic affairs of Morocco in future.

It was the first time in Morocco's history that a king's marriage had been publicized—and a three-day official ceremony is to be held at the royal place in April. Previous royal weddings had neither been announced or discussed. This time the palace also released pictures of Ms Salma Bennani, showing her in kaftan, the colourful traditional silken Moroccan dress, with her parents and the king's family.

"The announcement of the marriage and publication of the bride's pictures showed that the young monarch is committed to go ahead with his policy aiming to gradually improve the social and political status of Moroccan women," said Ahmed El Kohen, a sociologist and political analyst.

"Alongside the unusual opening of the king's private life to photographers, his marriage to a computer engineer from the middle class also showed the king's support for the advancement of educated women". In the months after his enthronement in 1999, the king appointed three women to senior portfolios, including an adviser at the royal palace—a move seen as an early indication of his support for enhancing women's status.

His bride has herself worked in Morocco's largest private conglomerate, ONA Group. According to the official version of the royal romance, they were not brought together in a traditional arranged marriage, but met at a party and fell in love in 1999, while Mohammed was still crown prince.

But there are limits to the king's room for innovation in what remains a very conservative country when it comes to religion and the role of women.

(SOURCE: *Asian Age*, New Delhi)

NAMIBIA

a. Artist gets 50 years for rape and murder of minor: The High Court in Windhoek, March 20, sentenced artist Gerson Tjivela to a 50-year prison term for the rape and murder of a 12-year-old girl.

Tjivela's trial - on charges that he raped and killed the child at Khorixas on February 6, 2001 - ended on the eve of the 12th anniversary of Namibia's Independence.

Tjivela (32) told Judge Peter Shivute he was not happy with being convicted and claimed he knew nothing about the crimes he had been accused of.

He asked the Judge to have mercy on him, and told him that as a child who grew up without a mother, he knew about the loneliness and hardships of children who do not have the privilege of having their parents' care during their childhood.

Tjivela said he did not want to see his children go through the same experience. He said he made a living at Khorixas as a signwriter and artist, and that he had three children - aged 14, nine and six - who lived with him until he was arrested and charged, since their mothers were unable to care for them.

b. Court clears path for 'illegitimate' son's claim: The High Court, March 22, cleared the way for a young Windhoek resident to pursue his claim for half of the multi-million dollar estate of the man he said was his late father.

In the process, Ruby Eugen Kalomo is seeking to change the law on the inheritance rights of illegitimate children.

The ruling by Judge President Pio Teek, Acting Judge Simpson Mtambanengwe and Judge Peter Shivute still leaves Kalomo a long way from getting what he says is his rightful half share of his late father's N\$5.5 million estate in Namibia.

The three Judges, March 22, ordered that shares in businesses which Eugen Georg Bergmann, the man Kalomo says was his father, left behind when he died in 1998 be finally attached. The decision confirms an interim order for the attachment of the shares which the court had first issued in August 2000.

Kalomo can now institute a claim against Bergmann's only surviving legitimate child, Carmen Carola Gaebert, for half of her father's estate.

The estate would have gone to her in its entirety because as Bergmann's only legitimate child she would in terms of Namibian law be his only valid heir, to the exclusion of any illegitimate children he might have had.

Kalomo claims he was Bergmann's son. However, because he was born out of wedlock in 1976, the common law on the inheritance rights of illegitimate children as it stands in Namibia holds that, unlike a legitimate child of a person who dies without leaving a valid will, Kalomo would not be in line to inherit anything intestate (when no valid last will and testament is left behind) from his claimed father.

(SOURCE: *Nambian*, Windhoek)

NIGER

a. Alert after release of aircraft hijackers: The government has placed all the Niger Republic's security operatives on red alert following the recent release of the four hijackers of the Nigerian Airways flight in 1993, it was reported, March 25.

Already, a letter has been despatched to all the security agencies, especially at the nation's sea and airports as well as the border posts.

According to the letter, which gives the names of the four hijackers as Beneth Ososanya, Hassan Lawal Kabiru Adenuga and Richard Ogundeni, the government noted that the international activities of the hijackers be closely monitored.

The recent release of the hijackers, after serving nine years imprisonment in Niger Republic, according to government would present a formidable challenge to the nation's security in view of the ex-convicts' criminal records.

"While their international activities are closely monitored, there is a need for the law enforcement agencies to mount adequately surveillance on their activities if and when the ex-convicts decide to return home," the letter warned.

Following the annulment of the June 12 1993 presidential election, the four men, under the auspices of Movement for the Advancement of Democracy (MAD), hijacked a Nigerian Airways plane on a routine flight from Lagos to Abuja on October 25, 1993 and diverted it to Niamey, Niger Republic.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

NIGERIA

a. Moves to ban Islamic law: The Nigerian government described the use of strict Islamic law in Muslim areas as discriminatory and illegal, March 21.

The move is response to international criticism following the imposition of a death sentence on a female adulterer. It threatens the already delicate balance between the mainly Christian south and the Muslim north.

Human rights groups complained that Islamic law, known as Sharia, now incorporated into the legal system of 12 provinces mainly in the north, allows for brutal punishment including stoning, beating and mutilation. The order that a woman should be stoned to death for adultery generated widespread publicity in Europe, including pleas from Italy and Spain for the case to be dropped.

Aware of the acute sensitivity of religion in Nigeria, the President Olusegun Obasanjo, a Christian, has not spoken on the issue but he is understood to be deeply concerned.

At a time when Islam is under the international spotlight through the American-led war against terrorism, the President does not want Nigeria to earn a reputation as a base for Islamic fundamentalism.

Nigeria is Africa's most populous country, with 125 million people, and is already riven by ethnic and religious violence.

Kanu Agabi, justice minister, wrote to the governors of the 12 provinces where Sharia has been adopted explaining that it would have to be dropped because it was in breach of the country's constitution on the grounds of discrimination.

(SOURCE: *Telegraph*, London and *Hindu*, New Delhi)

RWANDA

a. Tribunal to finish work by 2008: The United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) has decided to wrap up its work not later than 2008, according to the president of the court, Judge Navanethem Pillay.

In a letter to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, released, March 12, Pillay noted revisions to the workings of the court to allow it to complete its work before the designated date: The chief prosecutor of the ICTR, Carla del Ponte, has reduced the number of investigations the court will proceed with to 111 (from 136); has agreed not to undertake any new investigations after 2003; and has submitted a proposal to shift trials to national jurisdictions, thereby relieving the Tribunal's caseload.

Her proposal has been forwarded to the presidents of the UN Security Council and General Assembly, the UN reports.

Survivors accuse 14 defence investigators of genocide crimes: Two organisations of the 1994 Rwanda genocide survivors have accused fourteen investigators who are part of defence teams of detainees at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) of genocide crimes, it was reported, March 25.

The umbrella association of genocide survivors Ibuka ('remember') and the association of widows of the genocide, Avega, made the claims in a memorandum to the (ICTR), Registrar. This memorandum "will provide the proof requested" by the Registrar Adama Dieng on allegations by Ibuka and Avega which have accused the ICTR of malfunction.

Consequently the two organizations suspended in January 2001, cooperation with the Tribunal.

The memorandum revolves around four issues, including the problem of the investigators the associations are accusing, and the threat concerning the security of prosecution witnesses.

Another issue raised is the "ethical practices on the part of the defence in questioning vulnerable witnesses" and the lack of compensation for the witnesses.

Genocide suspect Kabiligi testifies in defence of Andre Ntagerura: Genocide suspect Gratien Kabiligi, March 25, appeared before judges at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda to testify in defence of Andre Ntagerura, one of the three defendants in the so-called "Cyangugu Trial."

Kabiligi was a Rwandan Army general in charge of military operations during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. He is one of the four defendants in the so-called "Military Trial," which is scheduled to begin before the tribunal on April 2. Kabiligi is charged with five counts of genocide and crimes against humanity.

Kabiligi is the 14th defence witness for Ntagerura, a former minister of transport and communication, who is jointly tried with

former Emmanuel Bagambiki, former Cyangugu governor, and Samuel Imanishimwe, a former military commander of Karambo military camp in Cyangugu province. All three have denied charges of genocide and crimes against humanity

Led by Benoit Henry, lead counsel for Ntagerura, Kabiligi testified that he was in Egypt on a government mission from January 25 to February 8, 1994. The prosecution alleges that Ntagerura, together with Kabiligi, distributed arms to 'Interahamwe' militiamen in Bugarama commune, Cyangugu province, in January 1994. The Interahamwe was the militia wing of the Movement of Republic for National Development (MRND), the party that led a coalition government during the genocide.

"It is impossible for me to have delivered arms in Cyangugu in January while I was in Egypt," Kabiligi told the court. The witness explained the details of his trip to Cairo, including talks he held with Egyptian military officials and a visit to the ancient pyramids of Egypt.

Radio call for extermination of Tutsis: Journalists at the Radio Libre Des Mille Collines (RTLM) broadcast messages describing the physical features of the ethnic Tutsis and calling for their extermination, an expert witness testified, March 20, before judges at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.

Language expert Matthias Ruzindana, the 43rd witness, produced RTLM excerpts, which he claimed called for the extermination of Tutsis.

"The Inyenzi [cockroach] have always been Tutsi We will exterminate them. One can identify them because they are of one race. You can identify them by their height and their small nose When you see that small nose, break it," Ruzindana quoted an excerpt from the radio that the prosecution alleges was used to incite genocide in Rwanda. Ruzindana also produced excerpts of *Kangura*, a Hutu extremist newspaper, which he alleged contained coded words that urged the extermination of the Tutsi.

Ruzindana was testifying against "Media Trial" defendants Ferdinand Nahimana, Jean Bosco Barayagwiza and Hassan Ngeze. Nahimana and Barayagwiza are RTLM founding members and Ngeze is a former editor and owner of *Kangura*.

They have all denied charges of genocide and crimes against humanity.

'Roadblocks set up to screen Tutsis': Thirteen roadblocks were set up in Butare town to screen and subsequently kill ethnic Tutsis during the 1994 genocide, a prosecution witness told judges at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, March 20.

The witness -- identified only as "QCB" -- drew a sketch of the town, indicating the areas where the roadblocks were located. Butare was among the last areas to succumb to violence during the April-July 1994 genocide.

QCB was detained in Rwanda on genocide charges. He has confessed to taking part in killings in 1994, and is awaiting his sentence.

QCB told the court that he witnessed two Tutsis killed at two roadblocks; the first was a woman whose name he does not know and the second was a Tutsi man named Leopold Ruvurajabu.

"The Tutsi woman was asked to produce her identity card and she did so rather reluctantly. She was immediately killed by 'Interahamwe' militiamen," the witness alleged. The Interahamwe was the militia wing of the Movement of the Republic for National Development (MRND), the party that led a coalition government during the genocide.

"When Leopold got to the sixth road block, he was asked to produce his identity card. He refused and was killed with a knife," QCB claimed, adding that he was killed on orders from Shalom Ntahobali, one of the six accused in the so-called "Butare Trial."

Mayor and ex- military officer deny genocide charges: Genocide suspects Paul Bisengimana and Aloys Simba, March 18, pleaded not guilty to genocide charges before Judge Lloyd Williams of St Kitts and Nevis at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR).

Bisengimana is a former mayor of Gikoro commune in Kigali Rural Province. He was arrested on December 4, 2001 in Senegal and transferred to the United Nations Detention Facility (UNDF) in March 2002.

Appearing before Judge Williams, Bisengimana pleaded not guilty to 12 charges of genocide. The counts include genocide, complicity in genocide, conspiracy to commit genocide, direct and public incitement to genocide, murder, extermination, rape and torture. Alfred Musei of Tanzania represented Bisengimana as duty counsel.

The prosecution alleged that Bisengimana ordered the killing, torture and rape of ethnic Tutsi in his commune. He was charged with the rape of a Tutsi woman in Gikoro commune on April 8, 1994.

According to an indictment prepared by the prosecution, after raping the woman, a Hutu man asked Bisengimana for permission to do the same. Bisengimana allegedly responded: "Do not keep them as wives, but rather rape them and then kill them afterwards."

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Rwanda, page 679:a]

SENEGAL

a. World Bank approves US \$14.7 million for nutrition project: The World Bank is to fund a community nutrition programme in Senegal that will support children under three years of age.

The programme will also build institutional and organisational capacity to carry out and evaluate nutrition interventions in the country, the World Bank reported, March 14.

The Nutrition Sector Enhancement Programme (NSEP), for which \$ 14.7 million was approved recently, will also support the nutritional status of pregnant and lactating women in poor urban and rural areas. It builds on an earlier successful Community Nutrition Project, in Senegal which was also supported by the World Food Programme and a German NGO, Kreditanstalt fuer Wiederaufbau in urban areas.

"The NSEP would adopt lessons learned from the Community Nutrition Project, emphasizing links to other projects such as the Social Development Fund Project as well as other interventions,

to address the multiple underlying causes to malnutrition," the bank reported. Programme activities will be developed to reduce underweight prevalence and micronutrient deficiencies among children and women, reduce under-five child mortality by improving the Integrated Management of Childhood Illness at the community level. It will also increase access to potable water and sanitation facilities in targeted areas and improve the quality and quantity of food intake at home. It will also raise community awareness of malnutrition.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SIERRA LEONE

a. World Bank, IMF support debt reduction package: The World Bank Group's International Development Association (IDA) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have agreed to support a comprehensive debt reduction package for Sierra Leone.

The package will be under the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative, it was reported, March 21.

Total relief from all of Sierra Leone's creditors is worth nearly US\$950 million, which is equivalent to US\$600 million in Net Present Value (NPV) terms. Net Present Value (NPV) of debt is the discounted sum of all future debt-service obligations (interest and principal) on existing debt.

The NPV of debt is a measure that takes into account the degree of concessionality present in the stock of debt. It is defined as the sum of all future debt-service obligations (interest and principal) on existing debt, discounted, under the HIPC Initiative, at market interest rates.

Whenever the interest rate on a loan is lower than the market rate, the resulting NPV of debt is smaller than its face value, with the difference reflecting the grant element, or 80 per cent of total debt outstanding after the full use of traditional debt relief mechanisms.

Under the decisions taken by the two organizations, assistance committed by IDA US\$122 million in NPV terms will be delivered over a 20-year period and will cover on average 89 per cent of debt-service obligations falling due to IDA.

b. Church disaster preparedness workshop ends: Participants in a week-long training workshop on disaster preparedness and management in Sierra Leone have recommended setting up a national emergency early warning team, the workshop coordinator, Hassan Bangura said, March 19.

Organised by the Council of Churches in Sierra Leone (CCSL), in the capital, Freetown, the workshop trained 30 CCSL participants from the country in skills and procedures for effective management of natural and man-made disasters.

One of the objectives was to build capacity for activities to help mitigate the effects of potential disasters. "We discussed peace building as a mitigation measure at the political and social level as well as other strategies to minimise conflict," Bangura, CCSL's coordinator of development and environment, said.

He cited the recent dissatisfaction voiced by some members of the Sierra Leone electorate over some aspects of the voter registration process as a possible warning sign of future problems.

In addition to the formation of an emergency early warning team, participants recommended that the workshop should be in "eye-opener for local capacity building" and a forerunner of future workshops to take place in other regions of Sierra Leone, Mangura said.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SOMALIA

a. US General sees evidence of Al-Qaeda in Somalia: General Tommy Franks, head of the US Central Command, has said he has evidence of Al-Qaeda's presence in Somalia, it was reported, March 19.

Prior to his arrival in Ethiopia, he visited Eritrea and Kenya or talks with top officials on combating terror. In an interview with the BBC in Ethiopia, he expressed concern over the situation in Somalia.

"We have known of links to Al-Qaeda [terrorist network] in and through Somalia for a considerable period of time," he said. He added that he could not go into specifics, but the US "will not take off the table the possibility of action against countries of concern".

"We are interested in states where there is a history of terrorist networks, training operations and that sort of thing," he said. "And so we are going to continue to keep our options open and continue to conduct dialogue with the frontline nations such as Eritrea, Djibouti, Kenya and Ethiopia."

He stressed that the US had strong relations with all four countries, saying they were "very much a part" of the international coalition against terrorism.

General Franks arrived in Djibouti, March 17, on the last leg of his tour.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SOUTH AFRICA

a. Court ruling on anti-AIDS medicine: A High Court judge ruled, March 25, that South Africa must provide women with an anti-AIDS drug that reduces the risk of passing the deadly virus to their babies.

The government, which has been widely condemned for refusing to expand a Nevirapine pilot programme to all pregnant women on cost and safety grounds, had appealed against a ruling ordering it to provide the drug while it takes its case to the Constitutional Court.

The Pretoria High Court ruled in December 2001, that the government had a constitutional duty to widen access to Nevirapine, which has been shown to cut mother-to-child infection rates by up to 50 per cent.

The government asked the court for leave to appeal against that ruling in the Constitutional Court.

Earlier in February the high court granted the government leave to appeal, but stipulated that it had to provide Nevirapine while the Constitutional Court case was pending.

The government then sought to overturn that ruling, but was turned down, March 25, meaning it must provide Nevirapine while the Constitutional Court hearing takes place. No date has been set yet for the Constitutional Court case. South Africa has the highest number of people in the world living with HIV and AIDS, with an estimated one in nine South Africans infected—around five million people. Judge Chris Botha said Nevirapine must be given to HIV positive pregnant women at all state hospitals and clinics with the capacity to do so.

South Africa's Nobel peace laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu welcomed the court's ruling, saying he hoped the government would abide by it. Tutu said South Africa should emulate poorer countries like Uganda, which was reversing the AIDS pandemic, and "get its house in order".

(SOURCE: *Telegraph*, Calcutta)

[Background Info. South Africa, page 668:a]

SWAZILAND

a. Serial killer tries to commit suicide: Swaziland's most notorious serial killer, David Simelane, who is awaiting trial in connection with the deaths of over 40 women and children in central Swaziland, tried to commit suicide, March 21.

Correctional Services spokeswoman Noma Dlamini said Simelane had shown signs of becoming increasingly depressed before trying to hang himself with a torn shirt.

Dlamini said that a warder who was patrolling the Matsapa maximum security prison cells saw Simelane hanging and he called other warders who helped to cut him down.

Simelane was gasping for breath and then he broke free and charged against the cell walls in another effort to kill himself, the official said.

Simelane was taken to a doctor who found that he had suffered no serious injuries but that it was obvious that Simelane was suffering from acute depression.

"Simelane alleged that he was having problems with some of the prison wardens. He has been returned to his cell and has been placed under constant surveillance."

Simelane has not yet been brought to trial because police claim they have yet to finish their investigations.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

TUNISIA

a. President calls for protection of Palestinian people: President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali called for international intervention for the protection of the Palestinian people.

He also renewed Tunisia's support to the Palestinian struggle for the establishment of an independent state, it was reported, March 20. Speaking on the occasion of the celebration of the 46th anniversary of Tunisia's independence,

President Ben Ali said, "we reiterate our enduring solidarity with the Palestinian people and our support for its heroic struggle to liberate its land, recover its sovereignty, and establish its independent state".

He added, "We call upon all active forces worldwide and the various peace-loving and justice-driven parties to intervene urgently to protect the Palestinian people and break the embargo it is being subjected to, and so that Israel respects international legality and abides by its own commitments".

Addressing the objectives of the constitutional reform project which will be the subject of a nationwide referendum, he said the reform Bill stems from "our conviction that it is important to make headway in protecting liberties and human rights, entrenching the dignity of the individual, heightening the values of loyalty to the nation, and consecrating solidarity among the various elements of our people, whatever section, category, or region they may belong".

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

UGANDA

a. Soldiers face trial for murder of Irish priest:

Two Ugandan soldiers could face the death penalty if found guilty of the murder of an Irish Catholic priest during an ambush a few kilometres from his parish in the Karamoja sub-region, it was reported, March 25.

"A field court martial has already started at the locality, and is being overseen by army lawyers appointed by the Commander-in-Chief [President Yoweri Museveni]," Ugandan army spokesman Shaban Bantariza said, March 25.

The soldiers are accused of shooting dead Father Declan O'Toole, his driver and a passenger in an ambush as they travelled along the Moroto-Kotido road on March 21.

According to Bantariza, O Toole was just a few kilometres from his parish of Panyangela, near Kotido, when the attack took place. Bantariza said that, if found guilty, the two men could face execution by firing squad.

"According to our laws, the sentence for murder is death," Bantariza said. The two Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF) soldiers were named by government-owned newspaper *The New Vision* as Corporal James Omediyo and Private Abdullah Muhammad.

b. 730 guns recovered in Kabarole: A total of 730 guns have been collected in the on-going disarmament exercise in Kabarole district, it was reported, March 25.

A source told *The New Vision* recently that the exercise which started two weeks ago "was successful." The guns are being withdrawn from vigilantes, local defence personnel and Special Police constables to rationalise local security arrangements.

"These guns were too many to be left with such people' yet we did not know the way they were issued," a source in the joint security team carrying out the exercise said.

Some of the guns were issued to civilians in the days of the Allied Democratic Force (ADF) rebel insurgency to enable them guard themselves against the rebels. The resident district Commissioner, Canon Benon Rullonga, was not available for comment.

(SOURCE: *New Vision*, Kampala)

ZIMBABWE

a. Mugabe romps home in flawed poll: President Robert Mugabe easily won Zimbabwe's election, March 13, but observers and Western countries condemned the violence-scarred poll as unfair.

Results announced by Registrar-General Tobaiwa Mudede showed Mugabe with 1,634,382 votes, well past the 50 per cent of ballots cast that he needed to extend his 22-year rule for six more years.

His challenger, former trade unionist Morgan Tsvangirai, trailed almost half a million votes behind. Mudede said 3.1 million people voted in the three-day election. But the manner of Mugabe's victory was widely condemned even before the final result was known.

Foreign and local observers said tens of thousands of people, mostly in the opposition stronghold of Harare, had been prevented from voting.

There were fears of a violent reaction from Tsvangirai's supporters at what they regard as a stolen result. Security forces were put on high alert and police put up roadblocks on approach roads to the capital Harare.

Tsvangirai's Movement for Democratic Change said dozens of heavily armed soldiers had surrounded its office in the second city of Bulawayo. Small groups of armed riot police moved into Harare townships loyal to Tsvangirai.

Tsvangirai accused Mugabe of destroying the economy of the once prosperous nation and systematically stealing the election to hide his deep unpopularity with voters. Mugabe's government has dismissed criticism of the poll, which information minister Jonathan Moyo called "exemplary".

Zimbabwe's political and economic crisis threatens to destabilize the entire southern African region.

There is no way these elections could be described as free and fair," said the Zimbabwean Election Support Network (ZESN), an umbrella organization of 38 church and civic groups.

Western countries queued up to condemn the election in which the President faced his first real challenge.

Mugabe sworn in as President: Robert Mugabe, was sworn in to serve another six-year term as President, March 17, after being declared the winner of the weekend's elections.

In the gardens of the colonial-style State House mansion, Mugabe, 78, swore to "bear true allegiance to Zimbabwe and uphold the laws of Zimbabwe".

In his inauguration speech, Mugabe railed against colonialism and imperialism, and urged other African leaders to support him against hostile Western nations.

Chief Justice Godfrey Chidyausiku bedecked Mugabe with a red sash of office, as five regional Presidents and three Vice-Presidents looked on.

Chief Justice Chidyausiku officiated, alongside the nation's judges in British-style scarlet and black robes and shoulder-length horsehair judicial wigs. A-21 gun salute sounded and four Chinese-built MiG fighter jets of the Zimbabwe Air Force flew overhead.

Mugabe won the poll against Morgan Tsvangirai, leader of the Movement for Democratic Change, who had posed the most significant threat to Mugabe's 22 years of automatic rule.

The government and Mugabe's ruling party have been widely accused of vote rigging, orchestrating state-backed political and abuses of the nation's laws and Constitution.

Mugabe said Britain, the former colonial power, and its "white allies" in the West declared the poll not free and fair because Tsvangirai, their favoured candidate, lost. "But, it is our people who decide, who must say so, not you, sirs, and not one person on 10, Downing Street," Mugabe said.

"That ugly head of racism we thought we had smashed, we have left it alive, it has risen again. A blow to the head and not the body of the monster is what we need," he said.

"Thanks to the people of Zimbabwe for loudly saying: Never again shall Zimbabwe be a colony. I thank them for their resolute anti-imperialist stand".

Mugabe led the nation to independence in 1980 and faced little dissent until recent years, when the nation's economy collapsed and political violence erupted.

Observer group slams poll: A Commonwealth observer group, March 14, issued a scathing condemnation of Zimbabwe's election, saying it did not reflect the free will of the people and was held in a climate of fear.

The group, issuing a preliminary report on the three-day election that returned President Robert Mugabe to power, March 13, listed a series of violations by supporters of the ruling ZANU-PF party and said it was particularly concerned about the activities of paramilitary youth groups.

"All of the foregoing brings us to the conclusion that there was not a free expression of will by the electorate," said the report, read to reporters by Nigerian groups chairman Abdul-salami Abubakar.

Polls seriously flawed, says US: The United States, echoing a host of independent observers, said March 12, that Zimbabwe's presidential election was "seriously flawed" and riddled with irregularities.

"We do not recognize the outcome of the election because we think it's flawed," US President George W Bush said, March 13, after Zimbabwean officials declared that Mugabe had won another six-year term. "We are dealing with our friends to figure out how to deal with this flawed election," Bush told a news conference in Washington.

US secretary of state Colin Powell alleged the Mugabe administration had subverted democratic principles and processes for more than two years. "Mugabe can claim victory but

not democratic legitimacy," Powell said. The United States imposed travel sanctions against Mugabe and his allies in February.

Poll manipulated, says MDC: Zimbabwe's Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) presented evidence, March 18, of what it said was comprehensive manipulation of voting figures by the authorities to ensure victory for President Mugabe in the presidential election.

If the figure allegedly used by authorities to inflate the votes for Mugabe were excluded, Morgan Tsvangirai, the opposition MDC leader, would have won by a narrow margin of 8,135 votes, it said in a document.

Welsham Ncube, the MDC secretary-general, said of the report: "It shows they [the government] were fiddling with the figures.

US, UK threaten to impose sanctions: Zimbabwe's government is facing the prospect of stronger international sanctions following the re-election of President Robert Mugabe.

The United States and several European nations said Mugabe's victory in the elections was marred by violence and intimidation. The United States and Britain threatened to beef up sanctions focusing on Mugabe and his allies. The European Union, which imposed economic and diplomatic sanctions after Mugabe refused to let its monitors observe the elections, has threatened further punishment. EU leaders are expected to discuss the situation in a summit in Spain.

Swiss impose bank freeze: Switzerland said, March 19, it was imposing sanctions on Zimbabwe, including a freeze on financial assets which might be held by government officials in Swiss banks.

It has made this decision in view of the manipulation of the presidential elections and on-going human rights violations, as well as similar steps taken by other countries including the United States and the European Union, the foreign ministry said.

The move, which went into effect, March 20, will also stop Zimbabwe government representatives from travelling through Switzerland. The announcement came just before the Commonwealth announced it was suspending Zimbabwe for a year after the violence-scarred election which returned President Robert Mugabe to power.

Pretoria tries to soften C'wealth sanctions: South Africa and Nigeria have stepped up diplomatic efforts to avert Zimbabwe's suspension from the Commonwealth over President Robert Mugabe's disputed election victory, diplomatic sources said, March 16.

They said efforts were under way to arrange a meeting in Harare, March 18, between the leaders of Africa's two most powerful countries and President Mugabe. The goal would be to fix an African political compromise before a meeting of the so-called "troika" of Commonwealth leaders in London, March 19, who have been asked to devise a response to the election.

Zimbabwe's state-owned *Herald* newspaper said President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa and Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria would not be attending Mugabe's inauguration, March 17.

But they would be in Harare, March 18, ahead of the meeting of the troika on Zimbabwe.

Treason charge against Tsvangirai: Opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai was called to court to face a formal charge of treason, March 20, a week after Robert Mugabe beat off his challenge in a controversial presidential election.

A spokesman for the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) spokesman said that Tsvangirai had been "invited to central police station for finger printing and from there he will be taken to court to be formally charged".

The charges against the MDC leader are based on allegations made before the elections that he was seen in secret video discussing Mugabe's assassination with Canadian security advisors. Tsvangirai has denied the charge, which carries a possible death penalty. His deputy, Welshman Ncube, was charged with the same offence before the election and released on bail.

Unions press on with strike: Zimbabwe faced the second day of general strike, March 21, which President Robert Mugabe's government has denounced as political sabotage by unions linked to opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai.

Tsvangirai, leader of the Movement for Democratic Change who challenged Mugabe for the presidency in March 9-11 elections, appeared in court, March 21, on treason charges.

He was released on bail of \$27,270 and surety of three million Zimbabwe dollars and is due to appear again on April 30, with two of his aides.

b. White farmer shot: A white farmer was killed in Zimbabwe, March 18, hours before the leaders of South Africa and Nigeria met President Robert Mugabe and his defeated challenger to urge them to cooperate in a government of national unity.

Benjamin Freeth, a Commercial Farmers' Union (CFU) regional official, said that farmer Terry Ford had tried to escape an attack by driving through a fence around his homestead after seeing a car blocking his main gate.

"He failed to drive through the fence and that is when he was dragged out of the car, bound to a tree and was shot through the head," he said. CFU spokeswoman Jenni Williams said Ford had called for help from police and neighbours during the night, saying he was being attacked by government-backed settlers on his farm.

Ford was the tenth white farmer to be killed since 2000 in Mugabe's campaign to reverse colonial land ownership patterns and the first white to be attacked since the election.

(SOURCE: *Deccan Herald*, Bangalore, *Asian Age*, New Delhi, *Hindu*, Madras and *Telegraph*, Calcutta)

[Background Info. Zimbabwe, page 680:a]

REGIONAL

a. Winners' Church—Africa's new gospel of wealth: One of the Africa's fastest-growing churches, the Winners' Church, is only a dozen years old but already has branches in 32 countries of the continent, says a report, March 16.

Nearly 50,000 faithful entered the gates of its three-year-old headquarters, perhaps Africa's showiest symbol of the growing influence of America's religious culture of giant churches and lucre-minded television preachers. Called Canaan Land, it is a 565-acre walled campus with a hotel, fuel station, bank, restaurants, shops, the foundation of a university and the continent's largest church auditorium.

Inside, half a dozen members gave testimonies that warmed up the crowd before the pastor's sermon. Soon after joining Winners, a man said, he had won a \$12,000 contract. A computer salesman named Peter cannot sell his products fast enough now. James, his prayers answered at long last, testified that a new job had flushed the anxiety from his heart. "I had a rest, the kind of rest you have if you have a big account somewhere," James said as the crowd at Canaan Land laughed appreciatively.

Christianity is growing faster in sub-Saharan Africa than in any other place on earth. Roman Catholicism and the major Protestant denominations are gaining more followers every day, but new churches like Winners are leading the boom. They are Pentecostal churches, often led by men influenced by American evangelists in the south and mid-west who preach a similar message that success comes to those who pray. On Sundays in nearly every African city these are the churches drawing the biggest crowds, especially among the youth.

Many traditional religious leaders and ordinary Nigerians say the new churches are less concerned with saving souls than with making money. "The quickest and easiest way to make money in Nigeria is to carry a Bible on Sunday and start preaching," said the 66-year-old Roman Catholic archbishop of Lagos, Anthony Okogie.

The boom in Pentecostal churches began in the last decade, a particularly troubled period in Africa, which had lost its economic and ideological moorings after the end of the Cold War. Nigeria, adrift more than most, populated by one in six Africans, has had the biggest religious explosion. According to the Pentecostal Fellowship Movement of Nigeria, 50 Pentecostal ministries had registered with it in 1990; today the number is 250. Now every other billboard on the highways of Lagos and every other hand painted sign in its neighbourhoods seem to point to a new church.

(SOURCE: *New York Times/Asian Age*, New Delhi)

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ANGOLA

a. Government, UNITA rebels sign peace accord: A ceasefire agreement reached between the Angolan army and UNITA rebels was officially signed in Luanda, April 4, the office of President Jose Eduardo dos Santos said, March 30

The ceasefire agreement, which was reached, March 30, in the eastern town of Lwena, was signed in the presence of dos Santos and UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's special advisor for Africa, Ibrahim Gambari, the President's office said. Representatives from the United States, Portugal and Russia, from the 14-nation Southern African Development Community (SADC), Gabon and Nigeria attended the signing ceremony.

The Angolan army and the UNITA rebel movement initialled a declaration, March 30, in Lwema in which they agreed to end Angola's quarter-century-long civil war. The opportunity for a deal emerged after the death in combat on February 22 of UNITA's long-time leader, Jonas Savimbi.

Peace brings fresh humanitarian challenges: Aid workers said, April 1, that peace will present a new set of challenges for the humanitarian community after almost three decades of civil war.

Four million Angolans—one-third of the population—have been displaced by the conflict. With the humanitarian operation already stretched to the limit, the initial impact of a ceasefire agreement could be to add an estimated 100,000 to 300,000 people to the numbers already needing assistance.

"We will have to work on two fronts: impress again on the government that they could do more, and go back to the donor community [for increased funding]," UN humanitarian coordinator Erick de Mul said, April 1. de Mul said he was optimistic over the peace settlement, but noted the humanitarian situation would not change on the ground overnight.

(SOURCE: *Times of Zambia*, Lusaka)

[Background Info. Angola, page 673:a]

BOTSWANA

a. Gabarone's first marina project: Botswana's first boating marina has opened to tourists on the Chobe River in the country's only water-rich region in the Okavango Delta, it was reported, April 3.

The new Chobe Lodge Marina is built around a natural creek that feeds the Chobe River, near the point where Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe's borders meet:

The creek has always been a meeting place for fishermen and traders using mokoro, small traditional dugout canoes, but has now been upgraded to serve luxury motorised yachts and other boats. The marina, the first of its kind in landlocked Botswana, is surrounded by dense indigenous forest and game reserves near the small border town of Kasane.

Tour operators are already offering Chobe River cruises, 'water safaris', wetland birding cruises, and special charters from the marina.

The Kanane/Chobe region boasts 450 species of birds, and is also home to 45, 000 of Botswana's 120 000 elephants.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BURKINA FASO

a. Meningitis toll now 672: A meningitis epidemic in Burkina Faso has caused 672 deaths from 4,758 cases recorded since January, the ministry of health reported, March 29.

It said that 15 of the country's 53 health districts had reached the epidemic threshold of 10 cases for every 100,000 inhabitants. "Despite measures taken to prevent the widespread outbreak of meningitis in 2002, the epidemic is well entrenched in certain districts," the ministry reported.

Health officials attribute the spread of the disease to the recent appearance in Burkina Faso, for the first time, of the Saudi Arabia meningitis germ - the W135. Burkinabe authorities said Muslims returning from their pilgrimage to Mecca in 2000 most likely brought in the germ. The vaccine against this strain is unavailable in Burkina Faso, which till now only knew the A and C forms.

Burkina Faso officials are offering free vaccinations and health care for people in the 13 worst-hit health districts, while the World Health Organisation (WHO) said it would provide the government with 1.9 million doses of vaccine.

Researchers from the US Center for Disease Control and Prevention, and WHO are in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger investigating the Saudi meningitis form.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BURUNDI

a. 4,800 families displaced in Rushubi: About 4,800 families have been displaced in Rushubi town in Isare district east of Bujumbura, a humanitarian source reported, April 3.

Displacement started, April 1, after a clash between the Burundian army and rebels, the source said, noting that it was in addition to the 1,800 families displaced in Rushubi since January.

"Neither the United Nations nor the non-governmental organisations [NGOs] could reach these people even today (April 3) because of the security situation in that area," Helena Mazarro, humanitarian affairs officer for the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, said.

"The authorities have said that these people are now living with other families or in schools and they [authorities] are requesting for assistance for them," she said. She said UN agencies and the NGOs were preparing relief materials for these people.

b. Four wounded in mortar attacks in Bujumbura suburbs: Four people, including two children, were wounded, April 1, when rebels fired mortar bombs into two residential areas in the suburbs of Bujumbura, sources said.

News organisations reported that successive mortar explosions were heard, April 1, in the north and south of Mutanga, around the capital. "It is true that one of the adults injured during the attack is an employee of the World Food Programme [WFP]," an official from the agency said. "The injury was not very serious," he said, adding that the official had been at home at the time of the attack.

The local Burundi news agency Net Press reported, April 1, that a WFP official, Aime-Pacifique Nyenimana, was slightly wounded in the attack, which took place at Mutanga South Municipal College. "The attacks were carried out by a small group of rebels who threw three mortar bombs at the population," the army spokesman, Augustin Nzabampema, said, April 2.

"Although their motive was not clear, it is quite likely that they wanted to kill and also create fear among the population," he added.

(SOURCE: *New Vision*, Kampala)

CAMEROON

a. Government launches anti-HIV/AIDS programme: The Cameroon government has unveiled a three-year programme against HIV-AIDS with the ultimate objective of lowering the national prevalence rate to under 10 per cent, health minister Urbain Olanguema Awono said, March 26.

Drawn up by the National Committee against AIDS (Comite national de lutte contre le sida), the programme pays special attention to helping the youth who are the hardest hit in the country.

"Our principal objective is to reverse the actual trend in the epidemic, reduce the prevalence rate to less than 10 per cent, and reduce by at least 25 per cent HIV's incidence rate among the youth, men and women by the year 2005," Awono said.

Official statistics put the current prevalence rate at 11 per cent. The anti-AIDS committee says 600 people are infected each day.

At least 12 per cent of 20-24-year-olds are HIV positive, while this figure stands at 10 per cent for 25 to 29-year-olds.

Emphasis will be placed on providing educational programmes that highlight all HIV-related issues: status testing, protection against the disease and the need to change risky sexual behavior.

Sexual intercourse accounts for 90 per cent of HIV infection.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

CAPE VERDE ISLANDS

a. International forum links desertification to poverty: Environmentalists and government officials have produced a unified position among countries most affected by desertification following a recent four-day international forum in Cape Verde's capital, Praia, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) reported, March 25

The 'Praia Declaration,' which will be presented at the World Summit on Sustainable Development to be held in August in Johannesburg, South Africa, says: "The poverty nexus is tied with desertification and drought in a vicious circle characterised by land degradation and loss of resources."

The declaration recommended that the summit consider fighting desertification and promoting natural resources management as a main strategy to reduce poverty.

It also urged more cooperation at sub-regional and regional levels to ensure cross-border sharing of skills and resources in the management of arid ecosystems.

UNDP resident representative in Cape Verde Joseph Byll-Cataria said it was "evident that arid countries are the ones most affected by poverty".

During the March 5-8 meeting, environmentalist and government officials from some 60 countries discussed implementation of the 1994 UN Convention to Combat Desertification and its relationship to the fight against poverty.

Over 170 countries are now signatories to the document. The forum, a forerunner to the Johannesburg meeting, was organised by the Cape Verdean government, UNDP and the UN convention's secretariat.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

a. China to provide US \$1.2 million in support: The governments of the Central African Republic (CAR) and China signed an economic cooperation worth 10 million yuan (US \$1.2 million), March 26, Radio Centrafrique reported from Bangui.

The Chinese embassy in Bangui said that discussions between the two governments were in progress as to how the funding could best be used.

China and CAR established diplomatic relations on September 29, 1964, after CAR severed its relations with Taiwan, with which it had established diplomatic relations in 1962. Relations between China and CAR were normalised following the signing of a joint communique between the two countries on August 20, 1976.

On July 8, 1991, the CAR government again resumed its relations with Taiwan, causing China to suspend relations.

Most recently, on 29 January 1998, the two countries resumed diplomatic relations after signing a joint communique in which CAR agreed "to recognise the government of the People's Republic of China as the sole legal government representing the entire Chinese people".

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

CONGO

a. Supreme Court confirms Sassou-Nguesso's victory: The Supreme Court in the Republic of Congo (ROC) has officially confirmed landslide victory of Denis Sassou- Nguesso in the presidential election held on March 10.

The official results are nearly the same as those announced by interior minister Pierre Oba on March 13.

According to a statement released by the Congolese Supreme Court, Sassou-Nguesso received 1,075,247 votes—more than 89 per cent of the 1,295,319 total votes cast from a body of 1,733,943 registered voters in the country of about three million people.

None of the six challengers who remained in the race garnered more than 3 per cent of the vote. Of the six, Joseph Kignoumbi Kia Mbougou received 33,154 votes, or 2.76 per cent of the total votes; Angele Bandou received 27,849 votes, or 2.32 per cent; Jean Felix Demba Ntello received 20,252 votes, or

1.68 per cent; Luc Adamo Mateta received 19,074 votes, or 1.59 per cent; Come Mankassa received 15,054 votes, or 1.25 per cent; and Bonaventure Mizidi Bavouenza received 11,981 votes, or 1 per cent of the total votes.

Former Prime Minister Andre Milongo, considered to be Sassou- Nguesso's main challenger, withdrew from the race on March 8, claiming irregularities.

b. Sweden provides US \$773,320 aid through UN: The government of Sweden has agreed to provide SEK 8 million (US \$773,320) to be channelled through UN agencies as part of the ongoing support for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the Republic of Congo.

Swedish diplomatic sources said, March 26, that SEK 5 million (\$483,325) would be channelled through the UN Development Programme (UNDP) for the reintegration of ex-combatants and small-arms collection; that SEK 1 million (\$96,665) would be channelled through UNDP for agriculture feeder-road repairs; and that SEK 2 million (\$193,330) would be channelled through the UN Children's Fund for a psychological assistance programme for war- affected children.

c. Train attacked, two killed: At least two people were killed and 12 wounded in an attack on a passenger train in the Republic of Congo (ROC), travelling from Pointe-Noire to the capital, Brazzaville, the government reported, April 3.

The attack was said to have taken place in two separate locations near Kinkembo, some 150 km west of Brazzaville.

The BBC reported that the train completed its journey, and that some of the wounded were in a critical state when they arrived in Brazzaville.

Government sources speculated that the attacks had been carried out by members of the Ninja militia of the Pool region, allied to the Reverend Pasteur Ntoumi.

Col Michel Ngakala, the High Commissioner for the Reintegration of Ex-Combatants in ROC in March, accused Ntoumi of opposing the demobilisation of his men and thereby constituting a threat to peace.

Although Ntoumi has expressed willingness to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) for his men to be reintegrated, negotiations between him and the government have thus far been unsuccessful.

Following years of civil war and the signing of two ceasefire agreements in November and December 1999, the process of demobilising an estimated total of 25,000 militia fighters began in ROC.

These included members of the Cobras (loyal to President Denis Sassou-Nguesso), the Cocoyes (loyal to former President Pascal Lissouba), and the Ninjas (loyal to former Prime Minister Bernard Kolelas).

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

CONGO (DR)

a. **'Rights abuses continue':** In its 2001 report, Human Rights Watch (HRW) said that President Joseph Kabila promised human rights reforms, but delivered "relatively little".

Positive moves included the moratorium imposed on the execution of death sentences in March 2001, and the demobilisation of child soldiers from the DRC army that began in May, HRW reported, April 5.

In May, the Kinshasa office of the African Association for the Defence of Human Rights, which had been closed in May 1998, was reopened. A Congolese Charter of Human Rights and a National Plan of Action on human rights were also introduced in June 2001.

"But the security agencies continued the numerous abuses for which they were notorious in the past," HRW said.

Government agents were allegedly responsible for the summary execution of 11 Lebanese just after the assassination of late President Laurent-Desire Kabila in mid-January 2001, HRW said.

A commission set up in February 2001, which included agents of the National Security Agency and members of the Military Detection of Antipatriotic Activities, to investigate the murder "exercised unlimited power" to interrogate and arrest suspects and afforded them no due process guarantees.

"Many detained by the commission were reportedly tortured and some disappeared." The worst abuses occurred in unofficial detention places run by the security agencies, including the death of one detainee from torture in mid-April, HRW said.

b. **ADB approves US \$500,000 aid to Goma residents:** The African Development Bank (ADB) has approved a grant of US \$500,000 to help finance humanitarian assistance to the victims of the January 17, 2002 eruption of Mt Nyiragongo in Goma, ADB announced, March 28.

The funds will be channeled through the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) to support rehabilitation of the education sector, which suffered significant damage leaving nearly 24,000 pupils without any education facility, according to an ADB statement.

The programme has been divided into two phases. The first phase, which started in January, involved emergency rehabilitation of classrooms, while the second involves the reconstruction

of primary schools and the purchase of furniture, materials and textbooks. The reconstruction programme will employ local labour, thereby generating income for some 25,000 households, ADB stated.

The programme, whose total cost amounts to US \$1.6 million, is co-financed by the ADB, the DRC government and a number of other donors.

c. **RCD-Goma frees 104 child soldiers:** The Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie (RCD-Goma) armed opposition group, April 4, gave custody of 104 child soldiers to the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and its partner agencies, International Committee of the Red Cross, Save the Children-UK (SCF-UK) and SOS Grands lacs in Goma, it was reported, April 5.

According to a statement from UNICEF, April 4, the liberation of this first group of children signals the start of a larger agreement reached with RCD-Goma to ultimately demobilise some 2,600 child soldiers from within their ranks.

UNICEF reported that the 104 children were placed in three different transit/orientation centres for an initial period of three months while the whereabouts of their families are established. In the meantime, the children will receive medical and nutritional care, as well as psycho-social support with a view toward their return to civilian life. The three centres are managed by SCF-UK, SOS Grands lacs and Don Bosco.

UNICEF, which negotiated the release of the children, is providing financial and material support for the programme.

"UNICEF and its partner agencies endeavour to persuade all political and military leaders in the eastern DRC as well as the Kinshasa government of the DRC to respect fully and to implement the basic principles of child protection, particularly the demobilisation and reinsertion of child soldiers," UNICEF stated.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

ERITREA

a. **Media watchdog urges release of journalists:** The Paris-based media watchdog, Reporters sans Frontieres (RSF), has called on the Eritrean government to free 10 detained journalists immediately, it was reported, April 4.

The plight of the 10 came to the fore when they announced they were beginning a hunger strike to protest against their detention without any charge for over six months.

(See Analysis, page 708)

"They are being held in very bad conditions and we are worried about their health," said RSF secretary-general Robert Minard, April 4. "All they have done is express their opinions

and nothing justifies their lengthy imprisonment. As far as we know, they have not been formally charged with anything and their detention is arbitrary and illegal."

A press release issued by the Eritrean Journalists' Association in Exile (EJAE) on April 3 said the journalists had spent 72 hours without food and water. In a message passed from inside their prison, the journalists said they would continue refusing food and water "until they got justice", the EJAE reported.

RSF noted that dozens of journalists had fled the country after the government closed down the private press in September 2001, accusing it of "endangering national security and unity". Private publications were accused of carrying the opinions of government dissidents, 11 of whom are also in detention.

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

[Background Info. Eritrea, page 543:d]

ETHIOPIA

a. ETC signs \$40,000 contract with a Chinese company: The Ethiopian Telecommunication Corporation (ETC) signed a US \$40,000 contract with Zhongxding Telecommunication (ZTE), a Chinese company engaged in supplying telecom equipment, for the purchase of Digital Distribution Frame (DDF). It was reported, March 29.

According to the agreement reached between ETC and ZTE, the latter will provide the DDF which will connect the switches system with the transmission system, according to Hongfei Cheng, ZTE senior engineer.

"This is the first agreement made between ETC and ZTE worth such amount of money," Cheng said.

The tough competition to provide technologically advanced telecom equipment, however, is to come when five other companies are to take part in the tender to provide the equipment worth 30 million USD, according to Cheng.

With the expansion of its telecom system, ETC has set a tender worth US \$30 million for the supply of Global System for Mobile communications (GSM) equipment for network expansion in 12 major towns, including Addis Ababa. "Six companies namely Motorola from Israel, Alcatel from France, Ericsson Radio Sys. AB from Sweden, Aircom Int. from U.K as well as Huawei and ZTE both from China will take part in the tender," he said.

The exact day for the tender, however, has not been fixed, according to Cheng. "It should not be too late as the expansion programme is expected to begin after three months." About 200,000 clients are expected to subscribe after the expansion, he said.

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

GAMBIA

a. 100 'blood diamond' pieces found with suspects: According to authoritative sources Pieter Diorvan, a Belgian and Ibrahim Turay, a Sierra Leonean who were arrested recently by Gambian security personnel were found with 100 pieces of diamond, it was reported, April 5.

The two suspects were apprehended in March by the security personnel on a tip-off.

Our sources said Ebrima Touray had been a frequent visitor and was apprehended after he flew into The Gambia to meet Pieter Diorvan, the Belgian national who usually collected the precious stones from him for onward shipping to overseas.

The actual value of the 100 pieces found with the suspects was not known.

According to reports, the blood diamond affair had been an issue in The Gambia, especially in the wake of the UN panel of experts report alleging that a prominent Gambian national had been involved.

The Gambian government had consistently denied the accusation and sources disclosed that the arrest of the two foreign nationals with 100 pieces of diamond gems was an important development which should be brought to the immediate attention of the United Nations, that some foreign nationals have been using The Gambia as a transit route.

[Background Info. Gambia, page 676:b]

b. 35 injured in accident on newly constructed road: A gele-gele van carrying passengers was recently involved in an accident in the Kombo East village of Sotokoi when the driver lost control of the vehicle, it was reported, April 8.

An eye-witness, Lamin Sanyang said the vehicle was over-speeding and claimed that the passengers on board the vehicle sustained some injuries. According to Sanyang, the victims were rushed to the Brikama health centre where they were treated and later discharged.

Most of the victims were ladies who went to attend the naming ceremony.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

GHANA

a. Dusk-to-dawn curfew in north: President John Kufuor has declared a state of emergency in the Dagbon area of the country's northern region, following an erroneous official announcement that the traditional chief had been killed in a dispute for power, the Ghana News Agency reported, March 28.

However, counsel for the Adani faction in the Dagbon chieftaincy crisis, Ibrahim Mahama, told the agency that his chief, Ya Naa Yakubu Andani II, was still alive. He said hired assassins had mistakenly beheaded the wrong man.

Police and troops are enforcing a dusk-to-dawn curfew over the entire Dagbon traditional area, and have been ordered to break up the assembly of any groups deemed likely to threaten public order, GNA reported. Furthermore, the Northern Regional Security Committee banned the April 1 annual Bugum (Fire) festival at Yendi.

It is still unclear what actually caused the flare-up, the *Accra Mail* said in an editorial, April 2. However, tension has been mounting between the Andani and Abudu chieftaincy wings over the celebration of the Muslim Eid ul-Adha festival. The Anandi wing, which controls the symbolic instruments of the ruler, was said to be unhappy that the rival Abudu Gate celebrated the festival in the traditional way at the home of its regent, GNA reported.

The tension finally erupted when factions of one wing attacked a man from the rival wing and destroyed his bicycle, the agency added. An undisclosed number of people were killed in the five-minute shoot out, GNA reported, quoting the district chief executive of Yendi, Mohammed Habibu Tijani.

Two killed, 1,200 displaced in ethnic clashes in north: At least 1,200 people were displaced following clashes between two ethnic groups at Dunglaar-Gberick, Bunkurugu-Yunyoo constituency, in Ghana's Northern Region, state-owned media reported, March 27.

The fighting over turf between the Japaak and Tanmon, on the one hand, and the Pulis on the other, resulted in two deaths. A third burn victim was receiving medical care, the *Daily Graphic*, an Accra daily, reported. It quoted the Member of Parliament for the area, Berrick Numburr, as saying the death toll could rise.

He also said that some 36 homes, foodstuffs and two corn mills were burnt down and 60 cows stolen during the violence that resulted when the Pulis, who were expelled from the area during fighting in 2000, returned to rebuild their homes.

"The fighting has been kept in check by beefing up security," Mawusi Afele, an editor with the state-owned Ghana News Agency said.

(SOURCE: *Daily Graphic*, Accra)

GUINEA-BISSAU

a. President threatens former PM with prison: Guinea-Bissau's President Kumba Yala has said that former prime minister, Faustino Imbali, could face a prison term if he did not return funds he misappropriated in 2001, sources in Bissau said, April 8.

Imbali, who was sacked in December 2001, following a presidential decree that strongly criticised his government, has denied any wrongdoing. Yala accused Imbali of diverting some 2.5 million euros (US \$2 million) which had been intended for the armed forces "to ease some problems," the Portuguese news agency, Lusa, reported.

"The money should be returned to the armed forces, or those responsible will go to jail," Lusa reported Yala as saying, April 5.

There has been no official investigation by the judiciary into the allegation against Imbali, sources in Bissau said.

In his latest report to the Security Council on Guinea-Bissau, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, said that the political situation had improved slightly but some key issues, including plans to restructure the armed forces, remained unresolved.

Since his election in early 2000 that ended a brief period of military civilian rule, relations between Yala and the military have been strained.

There were reports of a failed coup in December 2001, while in November 2000 former junta leader, General Ansumane Mane, staged an aborted attempt to regain control over the armed forces. Mane was killed by loyalist forces shortly afterwards.

b. Peace envoy detained: Alexandre Djiba, the peace envoy of the Movement des Forces Democratiques de la Casamance (MFDC), has been detained in Guinea Bissau, it was reported, April 8.

MFDC initially claimed that he was free, but finally accepted that he was indeed detained.

According to sources, Guinea Bissau authorities ordered the arrest of the MFDC spokesman due to his activities in the country. Alexandre Djiba had met with MFDC fighters and granted interviews to a local radio station as well as a newspaper.

The Guinea Bissau government, which is in a process of normalising relations with its Senegalese counterpart, decided to detain Djiba in order to end MFDC's use of Bissau territory as a withdrawal base after launching attack in Casamance.

Meanwhile, some MFDC executive members said the action of the Guinea Bissau government was not in the interest of the peace process in Casamance, as Djiba "is the chief negotiator of the Casamance separatist movement."

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

KENYA

a. Government sacks striking aircraft controllers: The government has sacked striking air traffic controllers for abandoning duty to press for better terms, it was reported, April 8.

Transport and communications permanent secretary Sammy Kyungu, April 7, invoked the Civil Service Code of Regulations related to neglect of duty and sacked the striking employees.

In an interview, Kyungu explained that those above Job Group J have been suspended while those below have been summarily dismissed as stipulated in the regulations.

This follows a call by President Moi, April 6, that retired air traffic controllers from the Civil Service, the Armed Forces and the private sector report to the Director of Civil Aviation (DCA) by mid-day, April 8.

Kyungu had at the same time warned the strikers that they risked being sacked. "Their continued decision to stay out of work is a gross breach of conduct," he said, April 6.

The Director of Civil Aviation, Chris Kuto, said that in Nairobi 30 of the employees had been dismissed while 30 have been suspended.

Kyungu, in a statement, said the ministry is set to enlist the services of persons with qualifications in air navigation, especially air traffic controllers, aeronautical information officers and aeronautical telecommunications officers.

b. Postbank, government sign pensions contract: The government has signed a memorandum of understanding with Postbank to disburse government pensions to beneficiaries through the bank's network, it was reported, April 7.

Minister for finance, Chris Obure, said, April 6, that the move was prompted by the bank's cost-effective delivery of service and its large branch network.

The minister said, while other financial institutions were closing down their operations and increasing their minimum banking balances and other charges, Postbank had maintained reasonable levels of charges, enabling many Kenyans to enjoy banking services.

The minister was speaking after he officially opened a customer service centre for the Western Union Money Transfer at the Standard Building along Kenyatta Avenue. Postbank is the sole agent for the money transfer company.

Obure urged the bank to position itself to face challenges by enhancing efficiency, corporate governance and ensuring adequate capitalisation, an improved deposit protection scheme and maintaining sound banking practices.

The Postbank managing director, Eric Saina, said the money transfer service was available to over 117,000 agent locations in over 188 countries, making it one of the largest networks in the world.

c. Leaders urge state to lift fishing ban: The government has been urged to lift the fishing embargo in Lake Victoria, it was reported, April 9.

Speaking separately, Rangwe MP Shem Ochuodho and former cabinet minister Dalmas Otieno said the ban was ill-intentioned.

"We feel that the government wants to frustrate fishermen, and would like the ban to be lifted immediately," said Dr Ochuodho. In the past week, the MP said, fishermen had lost millions of shillings.

Speaking at Nyawita, Dr Ochuodho asked the government to implement the Sugar Act to avoid confrontation between factories and farmers. He announced a plan to mobilise farmers in the former South Nyanza region to stage demonstrations against the government if it failed to implement the Act.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

LESOTHO

a. Poll preparations on track: Preparations for the general elections scheduled for May 25, by the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) are well on track, foreign affairs minister, Motsoahae Thabane said in Maseru, March 27.

He indicated that, despite some slight hitches the IEC was doing an excellent job in preparing for the elections which, hopefully would usher in an era of peace and stability in the country.

Thabane pointed out that the current peaceful political situation presented a fertile ground for holding of general elections.

"You can bear witness to the fact that every political party in the country is free to campaign and express its views as far as the coming general elections is concerned," Thabane added. He disclosed that every political party was free to go on air over the state-controlled Radio Lesotho to announce their manifestos and express their views about the proposed electioneering process.

"What is left for the government to do is to ensure that peace, tranquility and calm prevail over the electioneering process. Otherwise, everything is in the hands of the IEC as the government does not run and conduct elections," the foreign minister said.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

LIBERIA

a. New Deal condemns police harassment: Police brutality has intensified in Liberia since the imposition of the state of emergency in the country, it was reported, March 30.

Recently Frances Johnson Morris, former Chief Justice of Liberia, was stripped naked and thrown in jail by police director Paul Mulbah.

Several journalists and leader of an opposition party, New Deal Movement, were arrested. Representatives of the New Deal Movement residing in Ghana have issued a statement in which they condemned the prevailing police harassment and intimidation in Liberia.

Five rights workers detained: Liberian police detained five staff members of the National Human Rights Centre, March 28, but gave no reason for their arrest.

Aloysius Toe, project officer; Tunny Zeogar, administrative secretary; Peter Nickoson, office assistant; John Okai, dispatcher; and Field Monitor Sam Nimely were arrested at the organisation's offices in the capital, Monrovia.

The police, led by CID director Col Lemuel Reeves, had reportedly earlier gone in search of Toe, the organisation's project officer. Toe, who is currently acting executive director of the Movement for the Defence of Human Rights, a member of the National Human Rights Centre, condemned the arrest without charge of Nigba Wiaplah, acting chairman of the New Deal Movement.

Wiaplah was reportedly arrested because of a recent statement he made to a Monrovia newspaper, *The News*. In it he said that "arrogance" was the reason for the present war between rebels and the Liberian government, Amnesty International reported.

Anti-government forces, known as Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy, have been fighting to overthrow the government of President Charles Taylor since 1998. The government declared a state of emergency on February 8 following reports of shooting about 50 km north of Monrovia.

b. Rebel attack on Kakata repulsed: Government troops repulsed fighters of the Liberian United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) rebels who, April 3, attacked the central town of Kakata, 55 km northeast of Monrovia.

Two Lebanese traders were killed in the attack, while several schools including a vocational institute, a teachers' college and two secondary schools were closed, Jeff Mutanda, assistant minister for information said. A police station was also burnt down, he added.

"The attack occurred in the morning, taking government by surprise, but our forces regained control in the afternoon. Passenger cars have resumed travelling to the area," he said.

The rebels, he added, had earlier attacked Todee, 35 km from Monrovia on the road to Kakata and to neighbouring Ivory Coast, but were again repulsed.

Mutanda said he was unaware of another reported incident in Tubmanburg, northeast of Monrovia. "The rebels have adopted a hit and run strategy to scare people, but I have not yet heard about that," he said. Fighting around Tubmanburg, the BBC reported, April 3, was going on between the rebels and government forces.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

MOROCCO

a. Parliamentarians meet to improve women's lot: Parliamentarians from 24 African and Asian countries, who met in Morocco recently, called on governments to implement the convention on the elimination of discrimination against women, the UN Development Programme reported, April 3.

During their wide-ranging discussions—over three days in the southern city of Marrakech—the participants urged countries to revise family codes and end discrimination; analyse national budgets to ensure equity for women; and support poverty reduction programmes that respond to women's needs.

The participants, who gathered under the banner of the Africa/Asia Parliamentarian Forum on Human Security and Gender, also recommended an increase in women's access to decision making and made specific proposals on HIV/AIDS, socio-economic policies, and women's role in peace processes.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

SOMALIA

a. Hunt for elusive Al-Qaeda terrorists: Dozens of ships and surveillance planes ring vast stretches of the Horn of Africa in an attempt of block Al-Qaeda fighters from seeking refuge in Somalia or Yemen, it was reported, April 2.

The air patrols assess the information by radio to the allied ships. But hunting down terrorists in an area so vast is a monotonous task fraught with false alarms. The surveillance flights begin before dawn and go on for 10 hours. Even when the radar screen comes to life, it can send the plane chasing everything from whales to waves.

Actual ships resemble tiny specks on the horizon from afar. Gradually, their outlines appear. When the plane swoops in low near the ship, people on the deck are sometimes visible.

The German spotters squint down until they can read the names and home ports on the sides of the vessels.

On one recent outing they spotted four large container ships with the names *Tiger River*, *Colombo*, *Lucy* and *Bougainville*.

Then there was one wooden dhow, a ship with a raised deck on the stern that is common in these waters. It was loaded with something the spotters could not identify as well as a handful of small fishing boats.

The plane photographs each boat and sends the identifying information to US Navy commanders in Bahrain.

(SOURCE: *New York Times/Asian Age*, New Delhi)

Background Info. Somalia, page 693:a]

SOUTH AFRICA

a. Controversial oil deal with Iraq: In a first for the state oil sector, South Africa is buying R1-billion worth of crude oil from Iraq to replenish strategic stocks, it was reported, April 5.

But some industry sources question the deal, saying it smells "of another oil scandal. Iraq has been under international embargo since the 1990 Gulf war."

Oil transactions with Iraq have to be individually approved by the United Nations in terms of the world body's "food-for-oil" programme, which intends to ameliorate the humanitarian impact of the sanctions.

Industry sources ask why the Strategic Fuel Fund (SFF), the South African state body responsible for maintaining emergency fuel stocks, specifically called for Iraqi "Basrah Light" crude—a grade of oil they claim is not regularly used by local refineries. The contract, announced by SFF chief executive Renosi Mokate, was awarded in March to a inexperienced black empowerment company, Imvume Resources, in partnership with a Swiss-based trading company, Glencore International.

The government in the mid-1990s sold off large parts of South Africa's strategic oil stocks held at Saldanha.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

SUDAN

a. UN protests against humanitarian flight denials: The United Nations, April 5, condemned a decision by the Sudanese government to deny humanitarian flight access to 43 locations in southern Sudan.

In a statement, UN Emergency Relief Coordinator Kenzo Oshima urged the Khartoum government to rescind its decision and "immediately grant access to all the denied locations, to enable international agencies to continue delivery of life-saving supplies to the people of Sudan".

Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS), the umbrella operation for UN and non-governmental organisations operating in Sudan, submits a routine request at the start of each month to the government of Sudan and the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) for humanitarian flight access to a number of locations in southern Sudan.

Sudanese government authorities denied OLS access to 25 locations in southern Sudan in March which represented about 10 per cent of the requests, the UN said.

At the start of April, however, 43 locations, including the strategic town of Rumbek, Lakes region, were listed as being denied both flight access and general humanitarian access, according to relief officials.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

TANZANIA

a. Genocide trial of Rwandan officers adjourned: A UN tribunal, April 3, adjourned the trial of the man accused of masterminding the 1994 genocide in Rwanda and three other senior military officers.

The trial was adjourned to allow defence teams to receive key documents and witnesses' statements from the prosecution, officials said in Arusha.

The trial of Col Theoneste Bagosora and his three co-defendants opened, April 2, with defence attorneys claiming that they had not received French translations of the prosecution's pre-trial brief and the report of the first witness, American human rights activists, Alison De Forge. Trial documents are supposed to be translated into English, French and Kinyarwanda.

Judge Lloyd Williams allowed the United Nations' top prosecutor, Carla Del Ponte, to make the prosecution's opening statement, April 2, but following a closed-door conference, April 3, he adjourned the trial until September.

Bagosora, Lt Col Anatole Nsengiyumva, Maj Alloys Ntabakuze and Brig Gen Gratien Kabiligi are charged with between 10 and 12 counts of genocide, crimes against humanity and rape.

They refused to leave their jail cells to attend the trial's opening, claiming their rights had been violated by the failure to supply them with the translations.

All four pleaded innocent to the charges at previous hearings held at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in the northern Tanzanian town.

Defence attorneys accused the prosecution of not being ready for the trial. "We did not apply for an adjournment, we

simply said we did not have the documents", said Gersdom Otachi Bw'omanwa, defence attorney for Nsengiyumva.

"We are very disappointed. We came yesterday for the trial and are now being told to wait for months".

A tribunal spokesman, Kingsley Moghalu, said the adjournment was to ensure that when the trial resumed there would be no more problems. He said the problems, April 2, were the result of "logistical challenges".

"The problem is...that the indictments were amended and it was brought as a joint trial (rather than as individuals)", Moghalu said.

Rwandan and tribunal officials hope the trial will reveal the military's complicity in the genocide, as well as the planning behind the 100-day slaughter in which more than 500,000 Tutsis and politically moderate Hutus were killed.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, Madras)]

[Background Info. Rwanda, page 691:a]

TUNISIA

a. Chamber of Deputies adopts constitutional reform Bill: The Tunisian Chamber of Deputies (parliament), April 2, adopted a major constitutional reform Bill.

All members of parliament, except six who abstained voted in favour of the Bill.

The 182-seat Chamber of Deputies includes 34 opposition members representing political opposition parties. The majority party, the Constitutional Democratic Rally, holds the remainder of the seats.

A long plenary session discussion took place regarding the content and objectives of the amendments. The Bill was examined prior to that by an ad-hoc committee in the Chamber of Deputies.

Prime Minister Mohamed Ghannouchi replied to deputies' questions prior to an article-by-article vote. He noted that the committee held 16 meetings to allow opposition and majority members to discuss issues related to the amendments.

He also said the government agreed to introduce a number of modifications to the proposed amendments based on committee recommendations.

These changes have included lowering the minimum number of members of parliament needed to introduce a no-confidence resolution, from one half to one thirds of the deputies.

A simple majority and not a two-thirds majority was also set as a minimum for such a resolution to pass.

President Ben Ali signs order calling for referendum: President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, April 3, signed the executive

order calling voters to take part in a referendum regarding the constitutional reform Bill adopted by the Chamber of Deputies.

According to the executive order, the referendum will be held on May 26, 2002. It will be preceded by a two-week "explanatory campaign" starting, May 12.

Tunisian news agency, TAP, said the Tunisian President emphasized the "importance of this event which consecrates the will of the people and the right of all citizens at home or abroad to make their choice and to vote on the Bill in a climate of democracy".

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

ZAMBIA

a. Zesco won't be privatised: Zesco will not be privatised, Zambia's energy and water development minister Kaunda Lembalemba told Parliament, March 15.

Winding up debate on estimates of expenditure for the ministry of energy and water development, Lembalemba further banned debate on the electricity company.

He said even the concessions that were being talked about would be decided upon by the Cabinet. "No one is privatising Zesco, privatisation is selling away," Lembalemba said.

"All the people making statements on Zesco should stop. They are misleading people."

On calls that Zesco managing director Robinson Mwansa must be fired, Lembalemba said they were unjustified because the incumbent was a highly qualified and professional engineer.

Sinazongwe opposition UPND member of parliament Raphael Muyanda, March 14, called for Mwansa's sacking, alleging that he had failed to run Zesco.

Lembalemba reiterated his earlier statement that he did not believe in power cuts as favoured by Zesco while at the same time he did not condone defaulting customers.

b. Chief Nalubamba calls for Chiluba's arrest: Senior chief Bright Nalubamba, March 24, asked President Mwanawasa's administration to arrest and prosecute former President Frederick Chiluba and his cronies.

Senior chief Nalubamba said the negative impact of Chiluba's socio-economic mess was so grave that it amounted to genocide without military confrontation.

He asked President Mwanawasa to confiscate Chiluba and his lieutenants' passports before they sneaked out of the country.

"If the innocent KK (former President Dr. Kenneth Kaunda) was searched, arrested and prosecuted on trumped-up allegations, why should it be so difficult to arrest Chiluba".

Senior chief Nalubamba said Chiluba and his cronies must be made to answer charges of the abuses and crimes which they committed against the Zambian people.

"Mr. President, people do know that they are in this predicament primarily because of Chiluba's treacherous system of governance and so, any attempt to protect Chiluba and his cronies shall be a miserable destination for the new deal administration," senior chief Nalubamba said.

(SOURCE: *Times of Zambia*, Lusaka)

ZIMBABWE

a. Mugabe govt cracks down on protesters: Sixty- four people were arrested after police broke up protests against disputed presidential elections in Zimbabwe.

They remained in custody, April 7, and were denied access to their attorneys, a lawyer said.

Alec Machadehama, a lawyer for the umbrella organisation of civic groups that organised the April 6 protests, said he was denied access to the group's leader, Lovemore Madhuku, and 29 others being held at the main Harare police station.

"They are still being detained. I am yet to see them," he said.

Douglas Mwonzura, a spokesman for the National Constitutional Assembly, said 34 other demonstrators were being held in the provincial capitals of Bulawayo, Gweru and Mutare, also without access to legal advice.

Witnesses said many of those detained were beaten by batonwielding police during their arrests.

b. Ian Smith stripped of citizenship: Former Prime Minister Ian Smith said, March 27, the Mugabe government had stripped him of his Zimbabwe citizenship and passport.

Smith, 83, leader of Rhodesia, as Zimbabwe was known before independence in 1980, said authorities in Harare refused to renew his passport, leaving him stateless.

"They have cancelled my nationality. It is illegal and I'm not going to let them get away with it," said Smith by telephone from his Harare home.

He would not elaborate. Several appeal cases of citizenship rights are pending in the courts.

Smith said officials at the Harare passport office refused to meet him after informing him his passport was not being renewed ahead of a scheduled trip to Britain and the United States.

UK journalist released: A journalist working for Britain's *Daily Telegraph* newspaper was released in Zimbabwe after being held in jail for five days under new security laws, one of her lawyers said, April 1.

Thornycroft was arrested and accused of publishing false information under a security Act that critics say is aimed at stifling criticism of the President Robert Mugabe, who won a controversial election earlier in March.

One of Ms Thornycroft's lawyers said she had been freed, March 31, after a High Court ordered her release.

Ms Thornycroft, a 57-year-old Zimbabwean citizen, has been the paper's correspondent in the southern African country since July.

She was arrested while investigating reports of a campaign of retribution against the opposition Movement for Democratic Change, whose leader, Morgan Tsvangirai, lost to Mugabe in the election.

Local and foreign media had condemned her arrest and accused Mugabe, whose re-election has been widely criticised as fraudulent by western countries, of trying to muzzle journalists.

c. American charged with child sexual abuse: A 77-year-old American national was arraigned before a Harare magistrate's court, April 2, for allegedly sexually abusing several girls under the age of 13 since 1994.

Jesse Wayne Dye appeared before magistrate Dominic Muzavazi facing charges of contravening the sexual offences Act and breaching the Censorship and Entertainment Act.

The elderly man is also being charged on several counts of rape.

Dye's lawyer, Rikidzai Mabulala of Mabulala Motsi, and Partners appealed that there was no reasonable suspicion that his client had committed an offence.

He also argued that the charges of rape levelled against the accused were meant to make it difficult for him to be granted bail. Mabulala said that his client was impotent and could not have performed any sexual act.

Representing the state, senior public prosecutor Thabani Mpofu argued that there was reasonable evidence that Dye committed the offence.

He submitted that Dye had married two minor girls and allegedly sexually abused 15 other minor girls.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, Madras and *Independent*, Harare)

[Background Info. Zimbabwe, page 694:a]

ANALYSIS

Ethiopia, Eritrea on road to lasting peace

After fighting a tragic and bloody border war, which lasted over two years, killing scores of thousands of people and displacing hundreds of thousands more, Ethiopia and Eritrea demonstrated a desire to put an end to the hostilities by signing a ceasefire agreement in Algiers on June 18, 2000.

Six months later, they signed a comprehensive peace agreement, also in Algiers, providing, among other things, for a permanent cessation of the hostilities and the establishment of an independent commission to decide the border question.

The continued commitment of the two countries to the spirit of these agreements has been encouraging. Welcome too is their commitment to work closely with the United Nations and the Organisation of the African Unity in implementing the agreements. The peoples of both countries can now look forward to peace and security within their borders and, once again, to cordial relations with each other. Steady progress has been made since the agreements were formulated under the auspices of the Organisation of African Unity. In July 2000, the United Nations deployed the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea, or UNMEE, to monitor the ceasefire and assist in ensuring observance of security commitments.

This peacekeeping operation consists of some 4,000 military personnel from 40 countries. Since the deployment of UNMEE, the armed forces of the two countries have been separated by a temporary and demilitarised security zone, contributing to stability in the area and the return of the people displaced by the conflict. The parties are now able to begin focusing their attention on reconstruction and development. We are about to reach an important milestone of the peace process. Having considered pertinent colonial treaties and applicable international law and well as evidence provided by the two parties, the Boundary Commission will announce its decision in the delimitation of the border on April 13.

We salute the parties' continued and consistent reaffirmation that they will accept the decision of the Boundary Commission as "final and binding" as called for in the Algiers peace agreement. The Boundary Commission's decision will only be one step in the resolution of the border conflict. After delimitation (essentially a line on a map) comes demarcation, which is the process of physically erecting boundary pillars on the ground.

In the Algiers agreements, the parties have promised to respect the security arrangements throughout this process, with the continued monitoring of their compliance by UNMEE. The peacekeeping mission will also assist with de-mining in the border areas. The international community will be called upon to provide necessary resources to bring about the rapid completion of the demarcation process.

In the event that delimitation results in the transfer of territory, it is our fervent hope that any movement of population and civil administration will be carried out in an orderly and peaceful fashion, assisted by and in cooperation with UNMEE. As implementation of the Boundary Commission's decision proceeds on the ground, it will be equally important to continue assisting the peoples of Eritrea and Ethiopia to overcome their humanitarian difficulties.

We appeal to donor countries to extend maximum political and financial support to the two countries in their efforts towards socio-economic reconstruction and development. In the same vein, we recognise that the two parties will also need assistance to attain the ultimate objective of the peace process, namely, reconciliation between their two peoples and normalization of their bilateral relations.

The international community, especially those countries that have expressed a particular interest in the region, must continue to engage the two governments in the post-demarcation phase, particularly on the basis of the historical and traditional bonds that tie the people of Eritrea and Ethiopia and the common values and norms they share, including social and religious beliefs.

An effort must also be made to identify and support joint programmes and projects that would be beneficial to both countries. In this regard, the continued engagement by United Nations agencies and programmes in activities at the level of the populations affected by the war could go a long way in supporting reconciliation and dialogue. The consolidation of peace between Ethiopia and Eritrea has made great strides, but this is a work in progress. There are many actors in these efforts. The parties themselves have the major role. But the assistance of others is also required to help the two countries overcome the hostility and bitterness that has divided them in the past.

—Kofi Annan and Amara Essy in *Asian Age*, New Delhi, April 2002)

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ANGOLA

a. Agencies assess relief needs: The Angolan government and relief agencies will soon know more about the humanitarian needs in vast areas that have not been accessible for years, it was reported, April 16.

It is estimated that 50,000 people are in need of assistance in the regions previously cut off from aid because of the war.

Julie Thomson, information officer of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), said, April 16, that 36 joint assessments had been planned for 13 different provinces.

However, she said: "It is difficult to know how many [people] will need assistance. We suspect that some of the humanitarian conditions could be quite serious."

Thomson said new operations would not necessarily be launched at all sites. "One of the main goals of these assessments is to prioritise new operations and to define the roles and responsibilities of the government, UN agencies and NGOs," she said.

b. Unite for peace, church tells UNITA: Prominent Angolan cleric Rev Daniel Ntoni-Nzinga has urged UNITA leaders to resolve their differences so that they can contribute "in a viable way" to the historic peace process under way in the country.

"We recognise there are tensions, but they still have a chance to work them out. It is normal for people who have been away from each other for almost 10 years.

"They still have that golden opportunity to unite ... [and it is the] hope of all of us that the achievement of peace is not held hostage by tensions among themselves," Ntoni-Nzinga, executive secretary of the Inter-Ecclesiastical Committee for Peace in Angola (COIEPA) said, April 11.

His comments came as reports emerged of divisions between UNITA military commanders, who recently formalised a ceasefire with government troops, and UNITA-Renovada.

The latter split with late UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi and joined the Angolan parliament as an opposition party in 1998 when Savimbi decided to return to the bush to wage war.

UNITA-Renovada president Eugenio Manuvakola said at a press conference, April 9, that General Lukamba Gato, head of UNITA's management commission, was "arrogant and violent".

He was quoted as saying that the commission was illegal and that UNITA-Renovada would create a team to look at unifying UNITA's different factions.

(SOURCE: *Times of Zambia*, Lusaka)

[Background Info. Angola, page 697:a]

BENIN

a. Border dispute agreement ratified: Foreign ministers of Niger and Benin ratified, April 11, instruments of a joint agreement to resolve a border dispute at the International Court of Justice, it was reported, April 12.

The agreement was signed in Benin in June 2001 while the ceremony to exchange the ratified instruments took in Niger's capital, Niamey. News agencies quoted the foreign ministers of Benin and Niger, Antoine Kolawale Idji and Aissatou Min-daoudou, as saying both countries would abide by the verdict of the International Court of Justice.

The decade-old dispute is over the precise border of the two countries on Lete Island, on the River Niger and the Mekrou region. Both countries claim ownership of the island.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BOTSWANA

a. Agreement to repatriate Namibian refugees: About 2,400 refugees in Botswana could soon return to their homes in Namibia's Caprivi region. April 16.

An agreement between the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), Namibia and Botswana, April 11, paved the way for all the refugees to be voluntarily repatriated, UNHCR spokesperson David Nthengwe said. He said many of the refugees had been at the Dukwe refugee camp, northeast of Gaborone, since 1998, when they fled Namibia because of secessionist violence.

While some refugees have returned to Namibia in the past two years, Nthengwe said an earlier repatriation programme was suspended in August 1999, during an upsurge of violence in the area. He said the agreement had created a commission to implement the repatriation programme.

b. Thousands of cattle slaughtered: The Botswana government has slaughtered 11,900 cattle and plans to cull a further 12,000 cattle to contain the foot-and-mouth disease outbreak in the north of the country, it was reported, April 15.

The Botswana agricultural ministry said it would go ahead with the slaughter of a further 12 000 cattle in the Matsiloje area but that farmers would be compensated.

"The ministry, in collaboration with the Botswana defence force is starting operations but it is too early to say when the restocking exercise will begin," said agriculture assistant minister Pelokgale Seloma. The government has promised to compensate farmers with 70% cash and 30% livestock for the slaughtered animals. The country's vibrant beef industry has been adversely affected by the outbreak, which started in January.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BURKINA FASO

a. Parliamentary election campaign starts: Campaigning for Burkina Faso's parliamentary elections due on May 5 started, April 13, with 30 political parties contesting the 111 seats in the National Assembly.

The campaigns, scheduled to end on May 3, started with a call for tolerance from the chairman of the National Independent Electoral Commission, Moussa Michel Tapsoba. "I call on political parties and main actors and above all their leaders, to continue debate with ideas and tolerance, and avoid violence in their words and acts", he said.

For the first time, the elections will be held using one ballot paper listing all parties "in order to minimise fraud". The elections will be the third parliamentary elections in the country which has known five military coups since independence in 1960.

Initially slated for April 28, the polls were postponed to May 5 because of a low voter registration. The registration, which started on December 28, 2001 and was due to end on March 6, was also extended to March 20, 2002.

b. Red Cross appeals for funds to fight meningitis: The International Federation of the Red Cross is appealing for US \$59,000 to help counter the further spread of meningitis in Burkina Faso, where the disease has killed 1,056 people in 2002, and infected nearly 8,500, it was reported, April 19.

The money is to be used to support the Burkinabe Red Cross in a public awareness campaign targeting 1.9 million people in the 14 most affected districts, the Federation said on April 18.

It said 1,000 Red Cross volunteers would participate in a door-to-door campaign, providing information on early self-diagnosis and encouraging those suspected of being ill to seek immediate medical help.

The epidemic was first reported in January in the eastern district of Diapaga. Since then, the Burkinabe ministry of health has reported cases in all of the country's 53 districts, the federation said.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BURUNDI

a. UN Human Rights Commission adopts resolutions: The United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR), April 19, adopted resolutions on the human rights situation in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

In a consensus resolution on the human rights situation in Burundi, the commission welcomed the numerous steps taken by the transitional government to advance human rights and establish democracy, condemned all attacks on humanitarian workers and urged all parties to the conflict to end the use of children as soldiers, a statement said.

The commission also condemned the illegal sale and distribution of weapons and related materials. It requested states not to allow their territories to be used as bases for incursions or attacks against other states, the statement said, adding that it decided to extend the mandate of the special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Burundi by a year.

b. 21 civilians killed in Gihanga: At least 21 civilians were killed during fighting between government forces and rebels on April 6 in the town of Gihanga, in the northwestern province of Bubanza, local human rights organisation Iteka confirmed.

The confirmation followed a news item issued by Iteka on April 13, in which it reported that an estimated total of 38 people dead - 29 civilians, seven rebels and two government soldiers. Having been informed of a rebel presence in Gihanga, government troops reportedly entered the town around five in the morning of April 6. After surrounding a home where rebels were believed to be hiding, shots were fired from within, unleashing a fierce gunfight and resulting in the high death toll, Iteka reported.

(SOURCE: *New Vision*, Kampala)

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

a. Japan contributes US \$4 million in medical supplies: The government of Japan, April 18, contributed medical equipment worth US \$4,163,079 to the government of the Central African Republic (CAR), the embassy of Japan in Bangui said.

The supplies, presented by Japanese ambassador Nobuyoshi Takabe to CAR health minister Joseph Kalite during a ceremony presided by CAR President Ange-Felix Patasse, included computer equipment, beds, microscopes, five small trucks for the country's five health regions and two large trucks equipped for the conservation and transport of vaccines.

"This is the most significant contribution ever made by Japan to the Central African Republic in the domain of public health," Takabe was reported as saying by Centrafrique-Presse. For his part, Kalite noted that "for a very long time, our national health system has been unable to function effectively... due to a number

of shortcomings, as can be clearly seen in diminished vaccination coverage, the high level of HIV infection and the low usage of health services," Centrafrique-Presse said

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg).

COMORO ISLANDS

a. Election declared invalid: The Comoros Electoral Commission has declared the recent presidential poll invalid and ordered a repoll.

In addition, the planned election, April 28, for the presidency of the island of Grand Comore was postponed until the outcome of the bid for presidency of all three islands was clarified.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) representative in the Comoros, Andre Carvalho said, April 22, that the electoral commission recently passed the decision on the endorsement of the election to a follow-up committee.

However, the committee, whose broad task is to oversee the reunification of the three islands, sent the decision back to the electoral commission with a message that a decision had to be made by April 22.

The formal notice of the commission's finding was not announced by April 22, but Carvalho said the news had already filtered to most islanders.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info..Comoro Islands, page 686:a]

CONGO (DR)

a. Peace talks end in failure: Peace talks on the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR) collapsed, April 19, as the Kinshasa regime and two rebel groups failed to reach an accord to end their war.

The negotiations between the three belligerents, mediated by the South African President, Thabo Mbeki, achieved 'nothing', said Olivier Kamitatu, secretary-general of the Ugandan-backed Congolose Liberation Movement (MLC) rebels.

Kamitatu said that a two-way deal between the MLC and Kinshasa signed, April 17, would go ahead and that the other party to the war—the Rwandan-backed Congolose Rally for Democracy (RCD)—will be excluded.

"There is no deal with the RCD, but there is an accord between the MLC and the government", he said.

Deal between government and MLC rebel movement:

The government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DR) and the rebel Mouvement pour la Liberation du Congo (MLC) have reached an agreement in Sun City, South Africa, that will reunite 70 per cent of the divided country, it was reported, April 18.

The deal, which its architects claim was inspired by South African President Thabo Mbeki, would give the MLC leader, Jean- Pierre Bemba, the job of prime minister in a transitional government, while confirming Joseph Kabila as president, the MLC spokesman, Olivier Kamitatu, told a press conference in

Sun City, April 17. The other main rebel movement in DR, the Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie (RCD-Goma) would nominate the president of parliament, said Kamitatu, and would hold ministerial posts in the government.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, Madras and *East African*, Nairobi)

ERITREA

a. 5,000 soldiers to be demobilised: The Eritrean government is to demobilise 5,000 soldiers as part of a pilot project, the head of the National Commission for Demobilisation (NCD) said, April 22.

Tekeste Fekadu said that 5,000 male and female soldiers will be released from the army at four discharge centres over a period three days from April 24. The soldiers are the first of 200,000 who are due to be demobilised following the end of Eritrea's border dispute with Ethiopia.

Their early discharge is part of a pilot project, designed to test the government's Demobilisation and Reintegration Process (DRP), under which two thirds of Eritrea's army will be discharged over the next two years. The 5,000 soldiers to be sent home soon will each receive two months' food rations from the World Food Programme (WFP). They will also be given money, medical tests and transport home.

(SOURCE: *Monitor*, Kampala)

ETHIOPIA

a. Addis to sign preferential trade agreement with Khartoum: Ethiopia and Sudan will sign a preferential trade agreement in the coming two months, said Abdulkarim Ahmed Yousif, commercial councilor of Sudan embassy in Ethiopia, it was reported, April 12.

Yousif told *Addis Tribune* that as the two countries have committed to upgrade the trade relations between them, the agreement would add value to the existing trade relations. There would be duty free business exchange between them after the implementation of the agreement.

Ethiopia and Sudan are boosting their cooperation in terms of port utilization, banking, insurance, air and road transport as well as import-export business activities among others, according to Yousif.

b. Two NGOs closed for threatening national security: Two non-governmental organisations have been closed down after they were accused of threatening the national security of Ethiopia, it was reported, April 10.

Officials of the local organisations - which operate in Ethiopia's Somali Region said, April 10, they were banned from operating by the ministry of justice. The two, the Ogaden Welfare Society (OWS) and the Guardian, have been given 30 days to appeal.

Mohamoud Abdi Ahmed, head of the Ogaden Welfare Society (OWS), said the state police raided its offices in the town of Jijiga and shut it down. "We have been accused of being a threat to national security," he said.

Mohamoud said the ministry of justice had issued them a letter. "It said there was an investigation going on and that it found two NGOs being involved in business that was a threat to national security," he said.

"It said that was outside the mandate of the NGOs and so it took back our registration." The letter did not detail how the organisations posed a threat to national security, he added.

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

GABON

a. Ebola cases due to contact with gorilla:

The recent cases of Ebola fever in Gabon resulted from contact with a gorilla whose remains were found to be positive for the virus, the World Health Organization (WHO) reported, April 10.

In its latest update, WHO said the cases were reported in villages north of Mekambo in the northern Ogooue-Inwindo province. No cases had been reported in the area since February.

A total 65 confirmed cases including 53 deaths have so far been reported by the Gabonese ministry of health.

In nearby Republic of Congo, 32 cases including 20 deaths had been reported as on March 20, in Mbomo district, in the western Cuvette region while 23 deaths were reported in Kelle district.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info., Gabon, page 652:a]

GUINEA BISSAU

a. State, interest groups, civil society pursue dialogue: Representatives of the state, opposition parties and civil society have called for the creation of conflict- prevention and resolution mechanisms in Guinea-Bissau, it was reported, April 19.

The call, and other recommendations, capped a three-day National Dialogue on Democracy and Human Rights organised by the UN Office for Peace-Building in Guinea-Bissau (UNOG-BIS), in collaboration with the government.

The National Dialogue also recommended that the government should not interfere in the judiciary, and that the trials of political prisoners should be speeded up.

In his latest report to the UN Security Council on Guinea-Bissau, dated March 26, 2002, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan noted that 47 military persons arrested following an alleged coup plot on December 2, 2001, were being held without trial in various military barracks.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

KENYA

a. More air traffic staff sacked: The Kenyan government has finally sacked all the Air Navigation personnel except those at the Kisumu airport and Kabarak airstrip, it was reported, April 18.

In a letter to each of them, the permanent secretary for transport and communication, Sammy Kyungu said the date of the sacking was effective from March 30 "when you deserted duty". The latest move affects about 330 personnel countrywide, who had initially received suspension letters. Kenya has around 500 air navigation personnel countrywide.

Early in April, the government sacked 37 workers and suspended 82 in Nairobi alone, for what it described as defying orders to return to work. The sacking letter read in part; "on dismissal, you lose all your terminal benefits. You, however have the right to appeal to the Public Service Commission within seven days of this letter" said Kyungu. The letter was dated April 8.

Union to call strike over airline sackings: A workers' union, April 20, threatened to call a strike at Kenya Airways unless the airline unconditionally reinstates 32 employees sacked recently.

The Transport and Allied Workers Union also criticised the company for not informing it of its decision to send the employees home. TAWU officials, including the national secretary-general, Simon Kigalu, accused the airline of defaming the workers by "making malicious allegations of involvement in the illegal drug trade".

Kigalu told the *Sunday Nation*: "We warn Kenya Airways that if it fails to reinstate the employees, they risk facing industrial action." The official urged the sacked workers to visit the TAWU headquarters in Nairobi tomorrow, (April 21) "to chart the way forward".

[Background Info. Kenya, page 702:a]

b. 10 elephants killed in game park, poacher shot: A poacher was killed over the weekend in a shoot-out with game park rangers, and three others were on the run after the gang gunned down 10 elephants for ivory, Kenya wildlife service said, April 18.

The poachers, armed with AK 47 and G3 rifles, ambushed a herd of 11 elephants by moonlight, March 28, in Tsavo East National Park, southwest Kenya, killing the whole family except one adult cow which escaped.

Rangers had been on the poachers' trail for several days before the killing, tracking their footprints through the park. The prints led directly to the carcasses, which had been covered by branches and bushes. Reinforcements were brought in including a helicopter and other aircraft. The day after the ambush, ground forces caught up with the poachers, leading to the shoot-out.

"The poachers' gang leader was shot and killed, Kenya Wildlife Service said in a statement.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

LESOTHO

a. Emphasis on conflict resolution in run-up to election: With Lesotho's elections set for May 25, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is focusing on conflict resolution initiatives to avoid a recurrence of the unrest that followed 1998's poll, it was reported, April 11.

The UNDP said special emphasis would be placed on the mobilisation of political parties, NGOs, traditional leaders, church and women's groups to "play an active role in the electoral and democratisation processes".

The UNDP itself "would remain committed to maintaining its role as a neutral mediator and facilitate dialogue within Lesotho", it said in a report presented at the Lesotho High Commission in Pretoria, South Africa, April 11.

The country faced vast economic and social problems, and political stability and good governance were fundamental for effectively addressing these challenges, the UNDP said.

Its report said: "Lesotho is slowly recovering from the civil strife that followed the disputed May 1998 elections. The protests [by those who disputed the results] culminated in the military intervention by forces of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) during September 1998.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Lesotho, page 703:a]

MALAGASY

a. Rival Presidents strike peace deal in Senegal: The two rival Presidents of Malagasy have signed a landmark power-sharing peace deal, April 18, in Senegal.

The agreement, signed after more than 24 hours of feverish but determined African mediation, envisages a government of national reconciliation in Malagasy during a six-month democratic transition. The incumbent Didier Ratsiraka remains President during that period, with his challenger, Marc Ravalomanana, as his deputy. If neither man wins outright a recount of the disputed December presidential election vote, then after six months, a referendum will be held to select either Ratsiraka or Ravalomanana as the new leader of Malagasy.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Malagasy, page 677:a]

MALI

a. Transparency at the core of presidential elections: Mali has mandated two new bodies to ensure transparency in presidential elections due later in April, and allocated equal time on state radio and space in the government newspaper for each candidate, officials in the capital Bamako, said, April 10.

As many as 24 candidates are vying for the presidency. The National Electoral Independent Commission (French acronym CENI) and the General Delegation for the Elections (DGE), will supervise the April 28 polls, in addition to the ministry of territorial administration. The three have distinct but complementary roles, officials said. The candidates have been allocated 10 minutes per week on state radio; a six-minute spot on state television, and an additional 10 minutes to field questions from a journalist on the state television. Candidates are also entitled to a quarter of a page free space in the state owned daily, *l'Essor*.

b. African Development Bank to support irrigation project: The African Development Bank (ADB) has approved a grant of FCFA 590 million (US \$787,000) to finance a feasibility study of a 5,000 ha irrigation development project in Phedie and Sabalibougou, southern Mali, it was reported, April 11.

Initially the study will involve a diagnosis of the present situation of the scheme, updating information for the design of development infrastructure, and in the second phase will include additional studies on the future development of the project.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

NIGERIA

a. Nigeria to get back \$1 billion looted by late dictator: The family of the late Nigerian dictator Sani Abacha, who has been accused of looting national assets during his military rule, will return \$1 billion to Nigeria, the Swiss government said, April 17.

The out-of-court arrangement allows the family to keep \$100 million, which the Swiss Federal Office of Justice described as funds "acquired prior to Abacha's term in office and which, according to Nigerian authorities, demonstrably do not derive from criminal acts". The settlement also requires the Nigerian government to drop some criminal charges against Abacha's son, Muhammad Sani Abacha, and an associate, Bagudu Abubakar.

Nigeria had been seeking to recover as much as \$4 billion from Abacha accounts in various European banks. Part of the settlement money will come from Switzerland, which said it would turn over \$535 million to Bank for International Settlements in Basel for Nigeria's use. Other banks that have Abacha accounts are expected to detail their shares of the settlement soon.

b. 20 women convicted for indecent act: Twenty women have been sentenced to one year imprisonment each by an Abuja Upper Area Court for parading themselves and soliciting for men during the night at Wuse Zone 4, it was reported, April 18.

The accused persons, one Ms. Peace Ani with 19 others were charged with obscene or indecent act contrary to section 200 of the penal code. They pleaded guilty to the offence.

According to the First Information Report (FIR), "on Monday, (April 15) a team of patrol men under the command of O/C Patrol and Guard Central Police Station, Wuse, Supol Hamisu Jumba (DSP), arrested the accused persons around 3 am at Wuse Zone 4. The suspects were brought back to the station after they were arrested parading themselves and soliciting for men in a manner that would cause annoyance to the public.

(SOURCE: *Post Express*, Lagos and *Hindu*, Madras)

RWANDA

a. Pastor, son never lured refugees to ill-fated complex, says witness: Seventh Day Adventist Pastor Elizaphan Ntakirutimana and his son Gerard Ntakirutimana never invited ethnic Tutsi refugees to a church complex to be killed, a witness told the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), April 17.

The two are jointly on trial for genocide and crimes against humanity in connection with the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.

At the time of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, Elizaphan Ntakirutimana, 78, was pastor of the Seventh Day Adventist church mission at Mugonero in Kibuye. Gerard, 45, was a medical doctor at the infirmary, which lay in the same complex.

(See Analysis, page 719)

The prosecutor, among other accusations, alleged that the two planned and presided over killings of about 6,000 Tutsi refugees in the Mugonero complex during the genocide.

An estimated one million Tutsis and politically moderate Hutus were killed in the 1994 genocide according to an official census by the government of Rwanda.

Catholic priest denies genocide charges: Catholic priest Hormisdas Nsengimana, April 16, pleaded not guilty to four charges of genocide before Judge Pavél Dolenc of Slovenia at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR).

Nsengimana, 48, is charged with genocide, conspiracy to commit genocide, murder and extermination. Dressed in a blue suit, black shirt and white clerical collar, Nsengimana looked pensive as the charges were read out to him.

The Rwandan priest was arrested in Yaounde, Cameroon, March 21, 2002 where he was serving as a spiritual father in Bertoua, Diocese of Diang. He is the third Catholic priest to appear before the tribunal for their alleged role in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.

Other clergymen indicted by the ICTR include Anglican Bishop Samuel Musabyimana, Seventh Day Adventist pastor Elizaphan Ntakirutimana and Catholic priests Emmanuel Rukundo and Athanase Seromba.

[Background Info. Rwanda, page 691:a]

b. Former President Bizimungu arrested: Former Rwandan President Pasteur Bizimungu and former public works minister Charles Ntakirutinka have been arrested for engaging in illegal political activity, news agencies reported, April 22.

Chief Inspector Tony Kuramba said that Bizimungu was arrested, April 10, after a raid on his home found documents indicating he was conducting illegal political activities designed to breed discontent and endanger national security. He faces up to 10 years in prison and a fine of US \$227 if convicted.

"We have been watching him for some time and noticed that he ignored government advice that he should not engage in party politics," Kuramba was quoted saying, April 21. "He did not heed the advice and began to spread rumours and anti-government propaganda causing discontent, divisions and fear in the population."

Ntakirutinka, secretary-general of Bizimungu's unregistered political party, the Parti Democratique pour le Renouveau (PDR - Party for Democracy and Renewal) was arrested, April 20, after documents and computer equipment were seized from his home.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SIERRA LEONE

a. RUFP nominates Bangura: The Revolutionary United Front Party (RUF) of Sierra Leone has nominated secretary-general Pallo Bangura as its presidential candidate in the May 14 elections, the National Electoral Commission (NEC) said, April 19.

The RUF's nomination comes just under a week after the official deadline for submission of presidential nomination papers to the NEC expired. Chief Electoral Commissioner Walter Nicol said that national legislation had allowed the NEC to extend the deadline again and it had accepted the RUF's late nomination of Bangura, and his running mate, Peter Vandy.

"It is in the interest of everybody," Nicol said. Bangura served as minister of energy and power in a short-lived unity cabinet following the signing of the July 1999 Lome Peace Accord by President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah and rebel leader, Foday Sankoh. Vice-Presidential candidate, Vandy, was minister of lands, housing, country planning and environment.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SOMALIA

a. Prime Minister in hospital: The Prime Minister of the Transitional National Government of Somalia, Hasan Abshir Farah, has been hospitalised in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), a senior official said, April 9.

Abshir, who suffers from diabetes, was flown to the UAE on April 4, and was "taken to the hospital direct from the airport". Ahmad Ise Awad, the chief of staff in the Prime Minister's office said.

According to Awad, Abshir is undergoing treatment for complications arising from diabetes. "His sugar levels were way above what is considered normal," he said. Doctors at the Al-Mafraq Hospital in Abu Dhabi, to which Abshir was admitted, had brought down his sugar levels to "medically acceptable levels", he said. His condition had now improved to the point at which "doctors were able to perform laser eye surgery on him yesterday (April 8)", Awad said.

b. Concern over escalating violence in Gedo: A group of NGOs, UN agencies and donor governments have expressed concern over the deteriorating situation in Somalia's northern Gedo region.

In a press release, April 17, the Somalia Aid Coordination Body (SACB), said there had been an upsurge in violent fighting of late, which had caused death, injury and displacement to many Somalis. Furthermore, the insecurity was seriously impairing the delivery of urgently needed humanitarian assistance to thousands of people "in increasingly desperate need".

"The SACB strongly condemns the assassination of Nur Muhammad Yusuf, a senior local staff member of an international NGO who was killed on April 11, as a result of the current fighting, and the deaths of other innocent civilians caught in crossfire," the statement said.

It added that reports of increasing weapons movements in the Gedo region was causing particular concern as this indicated that preparations for further fighting were "ongoing".

c. Somali woman wins environmental prize: Fatima Jibrell has won the 2002 Goldman Environmental Prize, World's grassroots environmental award, it was reported, April 22.

Fatima Jibrell, who has faced war, drought and harassment while working to organize women and protect diminishing natural resources in Somalia, is one of eight 2002 winners of the prestigious Goldman Environmental Prize. The prize, now in its 13th year, was presented on April 22, 2002, at a San Francisco awards ceremony.

Somalia is suffering from a decade of civil war, crippling drought and, now, the potential of being targeted as a haven for terrorists. Despite these challenges, Jibrell and her organization, Horn of Africa Relief and Development Organization, have organized across clans and regions to lead women and their families in promoting cooperative and careful use of fragile natural resources.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SOUTH AFRICA

a. Labour objects to Immigration Bill: The Immigration Bill has again run into trouble, with organised labour objecting to it and charging that the Bill was approved in the National Economic Development and Labour Council (Nedlc).

Spirited objections by the main three trade union groups, April 18, cast doubt on whether the Bill can be completed by month-end.

For the first time the Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu), the National Council of Trade Unions (Nactu) and the Federation of Unions of SA (Fedusa) made a combined presentation to a parliamentary committee.

Cosatu's Neil Coleman said at the home affairs committee hearings on the Bill that this was appropriate because of the critical importance of immigration legislation. He criticised home affairs for attempting to block negotiations on the Bill in Nedlac "by claiming incorrectly that the Bill had been negotiated in Nedlac at the time of the white paper on international migration".

b. Police deport seven Thai women after court battle: After a long court battle seven women suspected of being involved in drug and arms smuggling were, April 20, deported back to Thailand, KwaZulu-Natal police said.

Superintendent Vishnu Naidoo said in December 2001 the provincial task team received information that eight Thai nationals might be brought to South Africa illegally as drug and arms couriers. The women were shortly arrested at a club in Durban after police found cocaine, mandrax, dagga and three firearms in their possession. They were also found to be illegal immigrants. The court ruled in their favour and released the women provided that they stayed away from criminal activities.

The state immediately filed a court action demanding that the women be sent back to Thailand.

"The state felt compelled to have the women removed from the country rather than to have them incarcerated at the expense of taxpayers," Naidoo said. On March 27, the state won their case and the women were ordered to go back to Thailand on the grounds that they were illegal immigrants.

c. Maduna signs Harksen extradition: Controversial German businessman Jurgen Harksen is set to face the music in his homeland, after justice minister Penuell Maduna signed an extradition order, April 19.

However, the extradition could be held up if the trustees of Harksen's estate decided on a last-minute bid to keep him in the country.

"We are going to be meeting advocates this evening to consider our position," one of the trustees, Eileen Fey, said, April 19. "It's quite a complicated legal issue and we need to get proper advice on it."

The trustees earlier indicated they would be unhappy if Harksen left before his insolvency inquiry, under way in the Wynberg Magistrate's Court, was completed.

d. Charges withdrawn against pro-Palestinian protesters: Charges have been withdrawn against 12 pro-Palestinian protesters arrested in Pretoria, April 17, police said.

"The charges were withdrawn by the senior state prosecutor, and they were released just before 1pm," said senior superintendent Mary Martins-Engelbrecht.

She could not say what the reason for the withdrawal was.

The 12, nine men and three woman, were members of the Palestine Solidarity Committee (PSC).

They were arrested during a picket outside the residence of Israeli ambassador to South Africa, Tova Herzl.

Martins-Engelbrecht earlier said the group faced criminal charges for failing to adhere to police orders to stop picketing.

e. Three Soweto train murder suspects arrested: Soweto police, April 16, arrested three suspects in connection with the murder of two on-duty train security guards.

The breakthrough was "an enormous stroke of luck," police Superintendent Richard Luvhengo said.

At 11.45 am, April 16, on a train bound for the Naledi railway station, an 18-year-old man apparently approached a security guard in plain clothes and struck up a casual conversation.

He asked the security guard if he could read his newspaper but when the guard refused, saying he was still busy with it, the youth became aggressive and boastful.

"Without knowing that he was speaking to a security guard he boasted about the April 15 murders, revealed details about the crime known only to police and disclosed the names of two other men who were allegedly involved in the killings," Luvhengo said.

The security guard promptly took the youth into custody and handed him over to police.

f. Dr Death cleared of charges: Wouter Basson, dubbed Dr Death, was freed after he was found not guilty on 46 charges including murders committed when he headed the country's apartheid-era germ warfare programme, it was reported, April 13.

It took Judge Hartzenberg more than nine hours, less a few short breaks, to deliver his 1,500-page judgment in Afrikaans in the Pretoria High Court. He then went through the charges of murder, conspiracy, assault, intimidation, fraud and drug possession one by one and in each ruled that the State had failed to prove guilt beyond reasonable doubt.

Anton Ackerman, the senior prosecutor, demanded leave to appeal against the judgment, given at the end of a 30-month trial. Judge Hartzenberg snapped: "How can you appeal when you haven't even studied it?" After more angry exchanges, the judge agreed to hear on July 29, an application for leave to appeal.

Outside the court, General Magnus Malan, the apartheid government's former defence minister and one-time chief of the Armed Forces, described the judgment as wonderful.

Dr Basson, 51, at first faced more than 60 charges, but it was ruled that cases involving alleged assassinations of

apartheid opponents outside South Africa were beyond the court's jurisdiction. Dr Basson said during the trial that the government had given him unlimited power and money to devise "defences" against possible chemical or germ attacks on South Africa. He faced evidence from 250 witnesses and tens of thousands of documents. He had denied multiple counts of murder, fraud and drug trafficking, arising out of his control of a top-secret South African army operation, Project Coast. Its mission was to help to eliminate enemies of the apartheid State. Under his orders, scientists allegedly conducted research into a race-specific bacterial weapon to sterilise the black population, schemes to distribute cholera through the water supply, and attempts to assassinate anti-apartheid leaders with assorted poisons.

g. Workforce new victim of AIDS: HIV-AIDS is so widespread in South Africa that many people will die before the age of 40, according to a report published, April 19.

Life expectancy is forecast to fall by almost two decades over the next ten years and wipe out an entire generation, the report by NMG-Levy, a leading South African labour relations consultancy said, April 19. It predicted that almost 30 per cent of South Africa's work force would be HIV-positive by 2005. The findings came as the South African government executed a dramatic policy reversal and gave hospitals permission to supply state-funded anti-AIDS drugs to HIV-positive mothers and rape victims.

The South African government, led by President Mbeki, has repeatedly blocked the provision of these drugs because it refused to accept a direct causal link between HIV and AIDS.

The report found that women with a life expectancy of 54 in 1999 would survive only until the age of 37 by 2010. Men could expect to live until they were 38. "The HIV-AIDS pandemic will take a dramatic toll on the most productive members of the population," the report said. HIV infection is now what the report terms "the single most important strategic issue facing South Africans".

Publication of the report's findings coincides with the change in policy towards combating HIV.

Thousands of hospitals and clinics were granted permission to dispense anti-AIDS medication to HIV-positive pregnant mothers in an attempt to reduce the high incidence of mother-to-child transmission of the virus.

Rape victims are also to be provided with the drugs needed to help prevent the spread of HIV-AIDS, following criticism that the government was failing to help the growing number of women, children and men infected with HIV-AIDS.

The policy revision followed two years of mounting international condemnation over the government's refusal to accept the orthodox scientific view that HIV causes AIDS.

Mbeki had insisted there was no proven link between the virus and the syndrome and that anti-AIDS drugs manufactured

by Western pharmaceutical companies were toxic. Mbeki's views provoked widespread anger among South Africa's majority black population and the resulting criticism damaged his international standing.

Almost 10 per cent of the 42 million people are believed to be HIV-positive, one of the highest infection rates in the world.

The Medical Research Council forecasts that it will result in the deaths of almost seven million people during the next decade.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg and *Times*, London)
[Background Info.: South Africa, page 693:a]

SUDAN

a. UN resolution on human rights: The United Nations Commission on Human Rights, April 19, narrowly adopted a resolution expressing deep concern over the human rights situation in Sudan.

The resolution—adopted by a vote of 25 in favour and 24 opposed, with four abstentions—expressed deep concern at the negative role of undisciplined militias armed by the Sudanese government and of the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), the use of children as soldiers, forced displacement, arbitrary detention, torture, and summary and arbitrary executions.

The Sudanese representative said Sudan had made progress in human rights, as well as the economic, political and social fields, and the resolution would only strengthen those who were opposed to the peace process.

"The slight margin is an indication that the issue is a political issue and [has] nothing to do with human rights, with Europe and developed countries on one side and African countries on the other," Muhammad Ahmad Diridieri, charge d'affaires at the Sudanese embassy in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi said, April 22.

b. 10 UPDF soldiers killed in bomb blast: Ten UPDF soldiers have died in a bomb blast in southern Sudan, defence minister Amama Mbabazi said, April 14.

Mbabazi said the soldiers died when, "a bomb went off accidentally," at Palataka near the Uganda-Sudan border.

Mbabazi was briefing the press on the ongoing joint military offensive code-named, "Operation Iron Fist," against the Lord's Resistance Army rebels of Joseph Kony. He said as a result of the UPDF hot pursuit, Kony had lost tight control of his forces and captives and fled to Ngong Hills, about 40 miles from the border.

Mbabazi said six LRA rebels were killed and several weapons captured, April 13, after a battle at Bin Rwot camp, which had originally fallen into UPDF hands.

"They went back to the camp in the hope of finding food. LRA has run short of food, medicines and ammunition. Our forces are preparing to deal with them the way we dealt with ADF," he said.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

TANZANIA

a. IMF approves US \$25 million in low-cost loans: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) said, April 16, that a continued strong performance of the Tanzanian economy meant it will be able to immediately draw on up to US \$25 million in low-cost loans.

"Tanzania's macroeconomic performance continues to be strong. Owing to a good performance in agriculture, real GDP growth in 2001 remained buoyant at an estimated 5.1 per cent," Horst Kohler, IMF managing director, said in a statement.

The IMF's fourth review of Tanzania's performance under the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF) arrangement had decided Tanzania would be immediately able to draw up to US \$25 million under the arrangement, the IMF said.

The PRGF is the IMF's concessional facility for low-income countries. The IMF in March 2000 approved a three-year loan for Tanzania under the PRGF of about US \$181.5 million to support the government's 2000-02 economic programme. So far, Tanzania has drawn about US \$100 million under the arrangement, according to the IMF.

b. 34 die in ferry accident: Thirty-four people were missing and feared dead, April 12, after a ferry overturned on the Kilombero River in Tanzania's central region of Morogoro, a regional security committee said.

But a spokesman for the Morogoro security committee quoted the owners of the vessel, the Tanzania Roads Company (Tanroads), as saying that 58 people had been issued with tickets to board the ferry.

"Since 20 people were rescued and with reports of four recovered bodies, the number of those missing should be 34," Paul Chikira, the spokesman of the committee, who is also Morogoro's regional administrative secretary said.

He said overloading of either passengers or cargo could not have been ruled out as the cause of the accident, but insisted that official records showed that only 58 people were issued tickets and that four vehicles were on board.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

TUNISIA

a. Cooperation pacts signed with China: President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and Chinese President Jiang Zemin signed several cooperation agreements in Tunis, it was reported, April 16.

The signed agreements concern economic and technical cooperation, non-double taxation, health cooperation, maritime transportation, air transportation, and cultural exchange programmes.

The agreements were signed by the Tunisian ministers of finance and public health and the secretaries of state to the

minister of transportation and foreign affairs. On the Chinese side, agreements were signed by the minister of foreign trade and economic cooperation and the vice minister of foreign affairs.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

UGANDA

a. Four Acholi elders shot dead: Four Acholi elders performing traditional rituals at Pabbo sub-county were, April 16, killed by the UPDF mobile patrol forces who mistook them for Kony rebels.

Four others survived.

The UPDF 4th division intelligence chief, Capt. David Operu said, April 16, the elders had twice contacted the UPDF detachment at Pabbo, 24 miles on the Gulu-Juba road, requesting permission to conduct the rituals in the bush.

He said the army did not grant them the permission given the rebels' threat in the area. Operu said the elders went and tricked the commander of the local defence unit at Ogul that they had been cleared by the Pabbo UPDF detachment to get a soldier from Ogul to escort them. The LDU chief then gave four men.

Residents identified the dead as Justin Okema, Okoya-Ocaya, Alfred Otto-Okunya and Peter Moyo.

The survivors are Martin Oloya, Santo Abola, Orach and Orech.

b. 13 Kasese poachers killed: At least 13 people from Nyamirami parish in Muhokya sub-county, Kasese district, have been killed while poaching in the Queen Elizabeth National Park, it was reported, April 17.

In the neighbouring Kitabu parish in Mahango sub-county, more than half of the families in the area have also lost at least one or two people to poaching.

"Poaching in the national park has left many widows and orphans in various parts of Kasese district. We may say poaching is another killer virus like HIV/AIDS," Eric Bakerethi, LC2 chairman Nyamirami parish said recently.

He was speaking at the funeral rites for Rogers Mateso and two others believed to have been killed by game rangers in the park in 2001.

c. 30 per cent of people in rebel areas have mental disorders: The director of Butabika hospital Dr Fred Kigozi, has said that about 30 per cent of people living in rebel active areas suffer from mental disorders.

Kigozi is also the president of the Uganda Psychiatric Association (UPA).

"The study that we have done in these areas indicate that 20-30 per cent of the people living in rebel infested areas are afflicted with Post Traumatic Stress Disorders (PTSD) which is caused by the impact of excessive stress and trauma," Kigozi told *The Monitor* in an interview, April 12.

He said PTSD is one of the common afflictions of the people living in rebel active areas and is responsible for the escalating domestic violence especially in camps.

Kigozi said the affected persons begin showing signs of stress and other anomalies. "Most people will have sleeping disturbances, loss of appetite, loss of sexual interests, and others may have chronic headaches, and general body weakness," Kigozi said.

(SOURCE: *Monitor*, Kampala)

ZAMBIA

a. Immigration arrests 10 foreigners: The immigration department has arrested 10 foreign nationals for various offences, it was reported, April 19.

Immigration Department public relations officer Greenwell Lyempe said, April 18, those arrested included three South Africans, three Nigerians, two Chinese, a Dane, a Tanzanian and a Kenyan. "A Chinese national was found together with his wife selling clothes in an open van at COMESA market," Lyempe said.

"When asked to produce the documents which authorised him to do the trading, he refused and in the process attempted to strangle an immigration officer by holding him on his neck tie," Lyempe said the officer was only saved by his colleagues.

b. Britain pledges K30b to fight corruption: The British government has pledged K30 billion in funding towards the fight against corruption in Zambia, it was reported, April 22.

Confirming the funding in Livingstone, British High Commissioner to Zambia Thomas Young attributed it to Levy Mwanawasa's government's commitment to fight corruption.

He said there appeared to be a chance by the new government to strongly address the scourge.

High Commissioner Young pledged his government and the co-operating partners' support towards the diversification of the Zambian economy. He said his government was aware of Zambia's problems in the mining sector which he said would only be permanently addressed through diversification.

(SOURCE: *Times of Zambia*, Lusaka)

ZIMBABWE

a. Mugabe extends olive branch to opposition: Talks between the ruling Zanu (PF) party and the pro-democracy opposition made unexpected progress when the former accepted an agenda of the opposition.

Demands for fresh elections, a new democratic constitution, and end to political violence and "confidence-building measures", including a halt to revenge attacks on opposition supporters since the elections, have been set down for discussion when

substantive talks begin. All were issues insisted on by the opposition Movements for Democratic Change (MDC).

Zanu (PF) had indicated previously that it would not even discuss the possibility of re-running the presidential elections, after which President Mugabe was declared the winner. Forty-eight people, mostly opposition supporters, were killed during the campaign.

The two parties were due to meet again on May 13 for five days of intensive discussions, said Kgalema Motlanthe, the secretary-general of South Africa's ruling African National Congress, who is mediating the talks with Adebayo Adedeji, a Nigerian diplomat. A third and final round of talks will follow later.

The government's adherence to the Abuja agreement, the Commonwealth document drafted in September 2001, that commits the government to the rule of law, freedom of expression and an end to state-driven lawlessness on white-owned land, is also to be discussed.

"It looks like Zanu (PF) is on the defensive," a Western diplomat said. "I would have expected them to have shown much more resistance to an agenda like this".

However, Patrick Chinamasa, the justice minister and the head of the Zanu (PF) delegation, said that the two sides had 'very divergent views'.

[Background Info. Zimbabwe, page 707:a]

b. Chinamasa to re-introduce disputed Bill: The controversial General Laws Amendment Act, which was thrown out by the Supreme Court on a technicality, will be re-introduced in parliament when it resumes sitting, the *Zimbabwe Independent* reported, April 19.

Political commentators have speculated that with the possibility of an election re-run now looming the government was anxious to re-introduce the sweeping measure which governs electoral conduct.

Minister of justice, law and parliamentary affairs Patrick Chinamasa confirmed the ill-fated Act would be re-introduced in parliament in its entirety.

"We are certainly bringing it back, as it is, when parliament resumes sitting," said Chinamasa.

"The problem was with the procedure and not the content. We were not doing this just for the elections and this is why it is coming after the elections," said Chinamasa.

[Background Info. Zimbabwe, page 680:a]

c. Euro-MP condemns arrests, calls for action: The honorary co-president of the 92-nation European Joint Parliamentary Assembly, John Corrie, MEP, has attacked Zimbabwe's continued repression of free speech and the media, it was reported, April 18.

In an exchange of views with EU Development Commissioner Poul Nielson, Corrie deplored the EU's reluctance to take further action against Zimbabwe under Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement: "Talks of Economic Partnership Agreements and regional relations in Africa must include provisions to act against individual countries that do not respect good governance, human rights, the rule of law, freedom of speech and the media. Democracy is the fundamental foundation for economic growth", he said.

(SOURCE: *Independent*, Harare and *Statesman*, Calcutta)

ANALYSIS

Rwandan genocide: Poor justice system

It is eight years since Rwanda was engulfed by genocide. Prosecutors at the international court trying Hutu extremists who started the slaughter planned to mark the anniversary by laying bare the political conspiracy behind it.

They wanted to use the trial of Theoneste Bagosora, the army colonel who is the alleged master-mind behind the murder of hundreds of thousands of Tutsis over 100 days, to blow away myths about the killings and draw attention to one of the 20th century's last great crimes. But, after fleetingly opening Bagosora's trial recently, the judges postponed it for six months for the want of a translation of two simple documents.

It was a fitting let-down for a tribunal that has vainly raised so many expectations and become a potent argument for and against the international criminal court, which was ratified recently. Some say Rwanda's tribunal-based in Arusha, Tanza-

nia—lays bare why international justice doesn't work. Others claim it is evidence of why a standing court is required. The Rwanda tribunal, like the international court trying Slobodan Milosevic at The Hague, is an ad hoc creation of the United Nations Security Council.

They share the same chief prosecutor, but the Rwandan court has been very much the poor relation. At least twice as many people died in Rwanda as in the former Yugoslavia, but the tribunal trying Bagosora and his cohorts has had neither The Hague's resources nor political clout.

Milosevic was brought to trial within a few months of his arrest in the Balkans. Bagosora has been in custody of six years and Rwandans are still waiting to hear the case against the man who brought them so much misery.

Or not. Tellingly, while Belgrade is gripped by Milosevic's performance in the dock, many genocide survivors are indifferent to the fate of Bagosora at the hands of the international court. They have simply lost faith in the ability of the tribunal to deliver justice.

Too many years of delays, incompetence and a perception that the court is soft on the accused have severely undermined the tribunal's standing in the place it was supposed to make its mark—Rwanda.

And when the court does catch public attention it is for the wrong reasons, such as the incident late in 2001, when three judges laughed as a woman gave lengthy testimony about being raped.

The judges later said they were laughing at the defence lawyer's questions, not at the victim. The genocide survivors' confidence in the court is so low that witnesses are now threatening a boycott of the tribunal, which could see its work brought to a halt.

The Rwanda court has had successes. It was the first international tribunal in history to convict anyone of genocide (the charge did not exist at Nuremberg), and it broke new legal ground four years ago when judges—in pronouncing on the guilt of a particularly brutal mayor, Jean-Paul Akayesu—declared for the first time that rape is an act of genocide when a woman is attacked because of her ethnicity.

That ruling was picked up by the Yugoslav tribunal and will be important case law for the ICC. The tribunal has also been remarkably successful at laying its hands on the main perpetrators of the genocide, if not actually getting them to trial. Sixty people are in detention, including much of the cabinet that oversaw the slaughter.

The then prime minister, Jean Kambanda, was persuaded to plead guilty to genocide. Most of his ministers will probably spend the rest of their lives in jail alongside him.

But justice has been so long in coming—only eight people have been convicted so far—and is so distant for the survivors and Rwandans in general that it is of marginal consequence to many of them.

One of the original concepts of the court was that it would play a central role in promoting reconciliation and decent government in Rwanda by establishing that even the most powerful could not escape justice and by exposing the lies that fuelled the hatred and fears that make genocide possible.

The court has been plagued by difficulties since its inception seven years ago, most notably mismanagement, underfunding,

corruption, internal politics and racial tensions between Western prosecutors and African tribunal managers.

The prosecution was chaotic from the start. The first chief prosecutor, Richard Goldstone, was focused on Yugoslavia and showed little interest in Rwanda.

Caria Del Ponte has sharpened the prosecution and streamlined some of the trials. She has pressed for more judges and is keen to move some of the trials to Kigali to bring them closer to the survivors and Rwandans in general.

It is probably all too late. The tribunal's chance to influence the shape of post-genocide Rwanda has gone. It is doubtful that the dispensing of international justice on African soil for the first time has persuaded other extremists to moderate their behaviour, though there is some anecdotal evidence from Congo and Burundi that militia leaders have curtailed ethnic attacks.

Instead, the genocide's survivors often find more reasons for bitterness at the tribunal's activities than hope for justice. They resent the fact that Kambanda and Bagosora, in jail, are in better accommodation than many survivors—and that the international court can impose a maximum life sentence, while those who carried out their orders, on trial in Rwandan courts, could face a firing squad.

The tribunal's real impact has been on how international justice will be dispensed from now on in Africa. Four years ago Pierre-Richard Prosper was the prosecutor who sent Akayesu to prison for life and led to the rape-as-genocide ruling. Today he is the United States war crimes ambassador.

Prosper was instrumental in ensuring that a new "special court" for Sierra Leone—expected to begin work later in 2002—was not modeled on the Rwanda tribunal. It is another UN ad hoc court, but this one mixes local and foreign judges trying cases under Sierra Leone and international law in the very place the crimes were committed.

Even before it opens, the special court has had limits set both on the number of cases it can try and its lifespan—in sharp contrast to the seemingly interminable work of the Rwandan and Yugoslav tribunals.

Prosper frankly admits that Americans would rather not see any more Rwanda-style tribunals. Instead, they favour a shift back to national justice. The Rwanda tribunal's legacy might be that it is remembered as the first and last of its kind in Africa.

—Chris McGreal in *Guardian Weekly*, published in *Deccan Herald*, Bangalore, April 2002

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April 23—May 6, 2002

Vol III No. 9

ALGERIA

a. Fourteen killed in prison fire: Fourteen prisoners have been killed and 11 injured in a fire that spread through a high security jail in Algeria, May 2, officials said.

The blaze—in the Serkadji prison in Algiers— appeared to have been started by prisoners who set fire to their mattresses after seeing a 19-year-old inmate try to commit suicide.

Most of the detainees at the prison were sentenced to death or serving life sentences for terrorist activities.

They include army officer, Lembarek Boumaarafi, sentenced to death for the assassination of President Mohammed Boudiaf in 1992. It is not yet known whether Boumaarafi was among the casualties.

More than 90 people, most of them prisoners, died at Serkadji in 1994 when detainees clashed with troops in a failed mass breakout.

Justice minister, Ahmed Ouyahia, visiting the prison after the fire, said he would improve conditions in the country's old and overcrowded prisons.

Extremists on the rampage kill 31: Armed extremists killed 31 people, mainly civilians, in two separate massacres, May 1, in the Tiaret region of western Algerian, officials said.

Twenty people were killed and five wounded in one attack at Ksar Chellala, while 11 people were killed in Sidi Khaled on the outskirts of the town of Tiaret, west of Algiers, the official said.

The attack came as the country began gearing up for legislative elections on May 30. The first massacre represents the biggest single civilian death toll in extremist violence in Algeria in 2002. Sixteen people, among them eight children and four women, were killed recently at Feidja, also in the Tiaret region, which has seen an upsurge in violence in recent weeks.

(SORUCE: *Hindu*, Madras and *Le Matin*, Algiers)

ANGOLA

a. Security Council asked to lift sanctions against UNITA: Former UNITA representative in the US, Jardo Muekalia, has called on the UN Security Council to lift the sanctions imposed against UNITA without delay to boost the renewed peace process in Angola.

"The UN has imposed these sanctions on grounds no longer existing in the country. While the desire to consult with the Angolan government is understandable, bestowing veto powers on it is incomprehensible. The Security Council has the duty to rise up to the moment and do what is right." Muekalia said, April 23.

UNITA holds the view that upholding the sanctions longer is inconsistent with recent developments. It hampers democratic efforts and represents an unwarranted obstacle in the process of transition from war to peace. In addition, it is quite contradictory for the Security Council to welcome the ceasefire signed on April 4, 2002, as an important milestone on one hand, and determine that " the situation in Angola continues to represent a threat to international peace and regional stability".

70 UNITA soldiers surrender at Rundu: Scores of battle-weary UNITA soldiers have surrendered to the Namibia Defence Force (NDF) at Rundu from where they were taken to various demobilisation points in war-ruined Angola, it was reported, April 29.

Among the 70 UNITA rebels who surrendered were child soldiers clothed in rags and torn shoes.

Some appeared malnourished.

The NDF commander in the Kavango region, Lieutenant Colonel Abed Mukumangeni, told *The Namibian* that it took two weeks for the the dejected-looking soldiers to walk hundreds of kilometres from former UNITA strongholds to Namibia.

b. MSF rushes relief to 18,000: The international medical relief organisation, Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), has started an emergency feeding and medical programme in Chipindo in Angola's southern province of Huila to aid 18,000 isolated people in severe need.

A medical and logistical team left MSF's mission at Caala, in Huambo Province, May 3, with two trucks full of fortified food and medical emergency equipment. The aid is to be distributed immediately among children under 10.

A therapeutic feeding centre and health centre will also be opened to treat the most severely malnourished and ill—in particular the children, an MSF statement said.

During an exploratory medical mission the MSF team discovered mortality figures as high as 6.1 per 10,000 people a day for children under 5 and 4.5 deaths per 10,000 a day for the population in general. Those figures are well above the emergency threshold of 1 death for 10,000 a day.

"We have seen hardly any little children under five. Lots of them had already died," the statement quoted Mercedes Tatao, MSF's medical emergency coordinator as saying. "A whole hill has been covered with fresh graves since September."

(SOURCE: *Times of Zambia*, Lusaka)

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

a. Government launches sweeping reforms: The Central African Republic (CAR) is launching "sweeping reforms" to promote good governance, "an important step towards reducing poverty and promoting sustainable development", the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) reported, April 29.

The reforms include improving public services; promoting decentralisation and local governance; enhancing economic policies; and setting up an effective, transparent judicial system that respects human rights.

Other areas of reform include the creation of an enabling environment for private-sector development, the promotion of civil society participation in public affairs, and the strengthening of the operations of the National Assembly.

CAR Prime Minister Martin Ziguele introduced the reforms in April in Bangui, at a national seminar organised by the government and UNDP. Participants included government leaders and representatives from the private sector, civil society, political parties, local communities and development partners.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

COMORO ISLANDS

a. Special committee to review election dispute: A special committee will be formed in the Comoros to review events surrounding the controversial April 14 election which saw only one candidate run for presidency, a diplomatic source said, April 25.

The independent committee would have five legal specialists familiar with constitutional matters.

Each island would propose three names to choose from and the remaining two would come from outside the Comoros.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which provided technical assistance for the elections, would help source the other two legal experts. They would review the dispute surrounding the validation of the election which saw Colonel Azali Assoumani elected unopposed. Opposition candidates Mahamoud Mrahdadi and Said Ali Kemal staged a last minute boycott alleging irregularities.

OAU sends envoy after election commissions were dissolved: The Organisation of African Unity (OAU) is to urgently send an envoy to the Comoros after the country's election commissions were dissolved for "incompetence and inability", a communique said, April 24.

A committee set up to settle disputes in the constitutional reform process, dissolved the election and ratification commissions, April 22, after they declared the election on the main island of Grande Comore invalid. They had been petitioned to do so by opposition candidates Mahamoud Mrandabi and Said Ali Kemal who boycotted the election at the last minute alleging irregularities.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Comoro Island, page 711:a]

EGYPT

a. Base of queen's pyramid unearthed: Archaeologists have discovered the base of a small, 4,500-year-old pyramid believed to have been built for a Pharaonic queen in the desert outside Cairo, the head of Egypt's Supreme Antiquities Council said, May 5.

The pyramid, made of stone blocks, was thought to have been built for the wife of Djedefre, whose father Cheops built the Great Pyramid at Giza, about 15 km south of the excavation site.

"This pyramid has been discovered by a Swiss-Egyptian expedition excavating near the pyramid of Djedefre, the son of Cheops, the famous king who built the Great Pyramid". Zahi Hawass, head of the Supreme Antiquities Council, told reporters.

"What is found is (the base of) the pyramid that is only maybe two or three feet high," Hawass said. "This discovery is very important. It shows that this pyramid is for one of the queens of Djedefre".

Djedefre is believed to have usurped the throne in Egypt by murdering his older half-brother roughly 4,500 years ago to become the third king of the fourth Pharaonic dynasty. He reigned for eight years.

Hawass said archaeologists had found the name Khufu, or Cheops, inscribed in hieroglyphics inside. They also found alabaster jars in the pyramid, which had three chambers and was found near Djedefre's own pyramid.

Hawass said the ruins were those of the 110th pyramid found in Egypt. Tourism is one of Egypt's main sources of foreign currency, and the Giza pyramids are a star attraction.

(SOURCE: *Statesman*, Calcutta)

ERITREA

a. Addis accused of violating border decision: Eritrea has asked the UN to clarify Ethiopia's decision to close the border with Eritrea to peacekeepers, saying the move violates the recent border ruling.

According to the ruling People's Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ) website, Shaebia, the government has told the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) that "the matter in

hand concerns Eritrea". It asked UNMEE to provide "detailed and official information on where the alleged border violation has taken place".

Ethiopia announced it was closing its border to UNMEE, April 27, accusing the peacekeeping force of "gross violations" for taking a group of journalists to the disputed border village of Badme via the Eritrean capital Asmara. Both sides have claimed victory following a border ruling, in April by an independent Boundary Commission.

They both say they have been awarded Badme - a symbolic area as this was where their border war began in May 1998.

Meeting between military leaders: The first meeting between military leaders from Ethiopia and Eritrea since the new border was announced was hailed as "positive and relaxed" by the UN, April 22.

Brigadier-General Yohanes Gebremeskel from Ethiopia and Eritrea's Brigadier-General Abrahaley Kifle met in Djibouti within the framework of the Military Coordination Commission (MCC). According to a statement by the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), both countries were praised for their encouraging reaction to the border ruling, issued in The Hague earlier in April.

The two military leaders have been meeting regularly under the MCC, which is chaired by UNMEE, as part of the peace-building process following the two-year border war. This was the 13th meeting of the MCC, and the sides held an initial discussion on how best to implement the border ruling as well as its military and security implications.

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

ETHIOPIA

a. OAU central organ welcomes boundary commission's decision: The central organ of the OAU mechanism for conflict prevention, management and resolution welcomed the decision of the Ethiopia/Eritrea Boundary Commission and commended its members for their "thorough and professional work", it was reported, May 3.

The central organ in its communique of the 82nd ordinary session also welcomed the acceptance by Ethiopia and Eritrea of the decision of the boundary commission as final and binding.

It called upon the two countries to extend full cooperation to the EEBC and UNMEE for the speedy implementation of the decision on the delimitation of the border, so as to expedite the demarcation process.

It also reiterated OAU's determination to continue to support strongly the peace process and to work closely with UNMEE and the parties in order to bring about lasting peace, according to an OAU press release.

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

GAMBIA

a. National Assembly ratifies UN anti-terrorism convention: The National Assembly, May 2, unanimously consented to the ratification of international convention for the suppression of terrorist bombings adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 15, 1997, in New York.

In moving the motion before members the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Baboucarr Blaise Jagne stated that the convention was initiated by the global concerted efforts aimed at curbing the world-wide escalation of acts of terrorism in all forms and vehement condemnation of all its methods and practices as criminal and unjustifiable.

He added that explosive or other lethal devices such as was used in the September 11 terrorist attack in the US in which some Gambians died, has made the government keener to join the urgent call against the international crusade against terrorism.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

KENYA

a. Justice Kanyeihamba named for Commonwealth panel: Justice George Kanyeihamba has been named on a panel of eminent Commonwealth judicial experts to advise on the review of the Kenyan Constitution, it was reported, May 3.

Prof. Kanyeihamba, a Justice of the Supreme Court of Uganda heads the list of 11 justices from eight countries including the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, South Africa, India, Zimbabwe and Tanzania.

Kenya is in the process of drafting a new Constitution. According to a copy of the invitation the panel will mostly advise on how to reform the Kenyan judiciary in a new constitutional framework.

It will also advise on how to transit from the current to a post-constitution making dispensation.

The panel will hold consultations with members of the Kenyan Judiciary and carry out site visits within and outside Nairobi to gain an insight into the current state of the judiciary and its position in the Kenyan society.

Kanyeihamba takes to the panel a wealth of knowledge and experience having twice served as Uganda's minister for justice and attorney-general.

b. Mombasa mayor suspended: Councillor Masoud Mwalimu Mwahima was swiftly replaced as Mombasa mayor by Councillor Abdullatif Ali Ubwa, it was reported, May 1.

Ubwa, popularly known as Tifu, was until April 30 Mwahima's deputy.

He was made the new mayor to serve in an acting capacity during a hurriedly convened meeting at Town Hall.

Mwahima, who faces an abuse of office charge, was suspended pending the court's hearing and determination of his case. Councillor Salim Bajaber of Tudor Four Ward, who has been in the anti-Mwahima camp, was appointed deputy mayor at the meeting that was attended by 29 councillors.

Business came to a standstill at Town Hall as anti-riot police cordoned off the area. Attempts by Mombasa lawyer Stewart Madzayo, who is Mwahima's lawyer, to serve the Town Clerk, Edward Karani, with a court order restraining the appointment of the new mayor were thwarted.

c. Four women carjacked, raped in Dandora: An armed three-man gang carjacked four women in Nairobi's South C, terrorised and raped them before abandoning them in Dandora, it was reported, May 2.

The terrified women were later rescued by police officers from the nearby Mowlem Police Post who also towed their vehicle. The gangsters had earlier carjacked a woman motorist and used her vehicle to block the car in which the four women were travelling.

The gangsters thereafter commandeered the vehicle with the four women to the Mowlem area of the sprawling Dandora Estate.

According to a police source, Ms Mary Adhiambo was driving her Toyota Corolla, registration number KAD 547Z, along Kapiti Road within South B Estate at the Mombasa Road junction, April 29, at about 7.30 pm when she was accosted by the gangsters.

They then commandeered her onto Mombasa Road and back towards the Nyayo Stadium roundabout before moving towards Plains View Estate. While they got to South C, the robbers snatched Sh4,500 and a mobile phone from Adhiambo.

d. Africa Online move blocked by court: An internet service provider has been restrained from setting up a business centre at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, Nairobi.

Chapex Limited, which runs such a business, has sued Africa Online accusing it of business espionage by trying to set up a similar centre using information allegedly obtained from it.

Judge John Mwera of Milimani Commercial Courts, Nairobi, gave the parties 30 days to verify the authenticity of two documents objected to by Africa Online, it was reported, May 4.

The defendant's lawyer, Michael Iseme, had said the documents were crucial to the case.

e. Sacked airport staff charged: Seven of the more than 260 sacked air traffic controllers (ATCs), April 24, appeared before Nairobi Chief Magistrate Boaz Olao, charged with deliberately breaching their contracts to serve the public.

They denied the charge. The ATCs broke their contracts knowing that their acts would deprive the public of an essential service. The seven ATCs are Dishon Mahinda, Mohammed Abdalla, Lawrence Amukomo, William Abira, Steve Nzilu, Tabitha Litala and Dominic Mutuku. They committed the offence on diverse dates between March 29 and April 8, at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport.

Olao released them on a Sh5,000 cash bail. He directed that their case be heard on June 10 and 11. He also directed that their case be consolidated with another in which 11 of their colleagues are charged with a similar offence. They are represented by lawyer-cum-legislator, Paul Muite.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Kenya, page 712:a]

LIBERIA

a. Extend UN arms embargo, says HRW: The United Nations Security Council should maintain the arms embargo against the Liberian government, Human Rights Watch said in a report, May 1.

Human Rights Watch also called for the arms embargo to be extended to cover the rebel Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), and for an end to Guinea's support for the LURD. The U.N. Security Council is expected to vote on the arms embargo by May 7.

The 23-page report, "Back to the Brink: War Crimes by Liberian Government and Rebels, A Call for Greater International Attention to Liberia and the Sub Region" provides compelling evidence that Liberian government forces fighting against the LURD are committing war crimes and other serious human rights abuses against civilians in the northwest of the country.

b. Weapons still buried in Monrovia, says Taylor: Amidst growing security concerns in the city, President Charles Taylor has disclosed that there are weapons still buried in Monrovia that have not been found.

Addressing editors at the Executive Mansion, April 29, the President said: "There are weapons that we know of that were buried in the city of Monrovia during the disarmament period. ECOMOG carried out cordon and search operations and dug out some of them . . . Some of those weapons are still buried in Monrovia that we have not found.

The President said "these are extremely strange times" and that government has taken certain decisions to ensure the safety of its people. He said that the decision to ban political rallies and mass meetings are intended to protect the citizenry from "trouble makers".

c. Independent newspaper closed under state of emergency: Reporters Without Borders (RSF), April 29, condemned the government's closure of *The Analyst* newspaper and called for the arbitrary ban to be lifted at once.

"This is the second time the paper has been interfered with on the pretext of national security since the state of emergency began February 8," RSF secretary-general Robert Minard said in a letter to information minister Reginald Goodridge.

Police searched the paper's offices on April 26 and ordered it to close. He said the paper was suspected of being "an agent for political detractors by inciting the public to create chaos" during the state of emergency. Police chief Paul Mulbah said the paper might not appear again.

RSF noted that on February 13 four of the paper's journalists, including managing editor Stanley Seakor and reporter James Lloyd, were arrested by police in Monrovia. Police chief Mulbah said they had been detained because of several articles that were "not out for peace" and "poisoned the minds of the people."

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

LIBYA

a. Gaddafi's offer on Lockerbie: The Libyan leader, Muammar Gaddafi, is prepared to make a "substantial formal offer" to compensate the families of the Lockerbie airliner bombing within a month, *Time* magazine of the US reported, May 1.

It said it had obtained a letter to relatives of the victims of the 1988 bombing from a lawyer negotiating with Libyan officials in Paris suggesting Gaddafi plans to make a deal, despite his previous refusal to admit liability for the attack.

The April 23 letter to families of the 270 victims of Pan Am flight 103, blown up over Lockerbie, Scotland, was written by a New York attorney, James P Kreindler, who has been negotiating with senior Libyans behind closed doors, *Time* said.

The letter does not predict how much money Gaddafi will offer, but the magazine said a number of estimates placed the figure as high as \$3.5 billion.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, Madras)

[Background Info. Libya, page 689:a]

MALAGASY

a. Ravalomanana declared President: The High Constitutional Court (HCC), April 29, declared opposition candidate Marc Ravalomanana the outright winner of disputed presidential elections.

After a recount of the votes from the December poll, the court said Ravalomanana had won 51.46 per cent of the ballots cast and incumbent President Didier Ratsiraka 35.9 per cent.

But Ratsiraka warned at the weekend that he would reject the HCC's verdict, alleging the court was biased and that the judges had been appointed illegally.

The composition of the nine member HCC was changed by Ratsiraka shortly before the December election—an act declared illegal two weeks ago by the Supreme Court. The old

HCC judges, of which six are alleged to be Ravalomanana supporters, were re-installed recently as part of the Dakar accord and charged with overseeing the recounting process.

Re-count of votes: Four days after a peace deal was signed in Senegal, a re-count of the disputed presidential election results began, April 22.

The re-count was one of the key terms of the agreement between the incumbent President, Didier Ratsiraka and his main challenger, Marc Ravalomanana.

On April 21, Ravalomanana, renounced his claim to the top job, telling the BBC he was now just the president of his supporters.

The opposition leader and mayor of the capital, Antananarivo, had previously declared himself president in February and was sworn in by a sympathetic Supreme Court to popular acclaim in the capital. He believed the final result of the December poll was manipulated to rob him of outright victory.

But, in the Senegalese capital Dakar, April 18, Ravalomanana and Ratsiraka appeared to make peace. They agreed to a power-sharing deal, leading up to a possible referendum to decide which of them will become president, should the recount prove inconclusive and fail to reveal a clear winner.

Governors press on with plans to secede: Provincial governors in Malagasy said, May 4, they had decided to carry out a threat to break away from central rule.

Five of the island's six governors appeared on television, May 4, displaying documents they said would formalise their secession bid, designed to support embattled president Didier Ratsiraka.

Ratsiraka's rival Marc Ravalomanana, who controls the capital Antananarivo, was declared president by a court, but provincial governors loyal to veteran leader Ratsiraka have not accepted the ruling.

"We have decided to create a confederation of five independent states," said Samuel Lahady, governor of the eastern province of Toamasina.

He did not give a date for when the breakaway confederation would come into effect. The governor of Antsiranana, a northern province, has declared independence.

With no immediate sign of a breakthrough in the four-month crisis, African diplomats left the island, May 4.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Malagasy, page 713:a]

MALI

a. Poll peaceful, says Konare: Mali's out-going President Alpha Oumar Konare has declared presidential elections as peaceful even as six people have been arrested over allegations of electoral fraud during the first round polling.

Speaking after casting his vote, April 28, the Konare said: It is a great day for our country and for our people. For the first time in Mali, we are witnessing the exit of an elected President by democratic process.

Police sources, however, said that the six people were arrested for their alleged involvement in electoral fraud during the country's presidential vote.

The six, including three women, were arrested, April 28, in Segou, 240 kilometres (150 miles) North of Bamako, on suspicion of having fraudulently obtained voter cards which they gave to other people to vote, a police chief in Segou said.

Protests called against disputed election results: The candidate favoured by Mali's Islamic leaders called for a day of protests, May 4, in the wake of disputed presidential election results that saw him finish out of the running.

Former prime minister Ibrahim Boubacar Keita placed third with 21 per cent of the vote, according to results from the presidential election released, May 3, by the government.

Military strongman Amadou Toumani Toure took 28 per cent, followed by Soumaila Cisse of the ruling Adema party with 23 per cent.

Since no candidate won an outright majority in the first round of voting, which took place on April 28, the two top vote-getters are to face each other in a run-off election scheduled for May 12.

The winner will succeed incumbent president Alpha Oumar Konare, who has served the constitutional maximum of two five-year terms.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MOROCCO

a. Polisario firm on self-determination: The Polisario Front is firm on self-determination for the Saharawi people and the path leading to it, namely a free and democratic referendum, it was reported, April 30.

As the UN Secretary General indicated in his report of February, the holding of such referendum has always been hindered by Morocco.

It is also to be recalled, that the so-called third way proposed in the "Framework Agreement" is rejected squarely, both in its form and content, because it overrides the inalienable right for which the Saharawi people have been fighting for more than 28 years.

Furthermore, it aims to legitimise the illegal occupation of Western Sahara by Morocco, thus constituting a gross denial of justice

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Morocco, page 678:a]

MOZAMBIQUE

a. Army hopes to destroy landmines by 2003: The Mozambican army hopes to destroy the more than 30,000 landmines it still has in stock by 2003, the National Institute for Demining (IND) said, April 26.

A batch of 2,500 of the killer devices was destroyed on April 19 and immediate plans are to destroy another 10,000 in the central and southern regions, IND national director Artur Verissimo said.

Clearing started in 1993 after a protracted civil war which saw landmines laid around strategic towns and installations across the country.

"During conflict there was no landmine mapping so nobody knows where they are. We have to talk to local communities to find where the mines are. We have to mark the areas and get support from donors to clear the area," Verissimo said.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

NIGERIA

a. Air crash claims 148 lives, only 5 survive: Rescue workers and investigators combed blackened rubble where a Nigerian airliner crashed into a packed residential district, May 4, killing at least 148 people and tearing a swathe through the city.

President Olusegun Obasanjo announced two days of national mourning and ordered flags to be flown at half mast, as stunned relatives queued at a city hospital to try to identify the remains of their loved ones.

The Nigerian Red Cross said initial figures show that 149 people had died.

Another 49 were injured and in hospital and hundreds have been made homeless in the northern city of Kano.

The Nigerian airline Eas said 71 passengers and eight crew members had been on board on its twin-engine passenger jet when it ploughed into the densely inhabited area, May 4. Hospital officials said that only five on board had survived.

Rescue workers picking through the devastated lower class suburb of Gwammaja said more bodies could yet be found and that many were too badly charred to be identified.

"I've lost my child, I've lost Fummi," wailed 22-year-old Shola Ogunkoya, collapsing into a relative's supporting arms. As weeping, stunned residents looked on in horror, Red Cross volunteers tried to reunite families and contact relatives of the 75 people the organisation said were on the aircraft.

Under a thick cloud of dust and in baking sun, the residents struggled to salvage what they could of their valuables, disbelief and anger giving way to despair.

b. Elections in August: Nigeria said the country's first elections, since the end of military rule in 1999, would be held on August 10.

The vote is likely to be seen as a pointer to the conduct of crucial presidential and general elections in 2003. Civilian rulers have not organised successful polls since Nigeria's independence from Britain in 1960. Attempts in the 1960s and in 1983 both ended in violent disputes.

The election, originally slated for May 18 was thrown into doubt after a court ruled that electoral authorities could not use the existing voter register for the elections.

Under the new arrangement incumbent local council governments nationwide will be dissolved on May 29 and transitional committees appointed in their place, while new elected council officials will assume office on August 29.

The voter register compiled in 1998 will be reviewed and new political parties registered during the transition period.

State governors had threatened to go ahead with the poll after the Supreme Court quashed a hotly debated bid by lawmakers to extend the life of local councils beyond the three years, allowed by the constitution so local polls could be held alongside national elections in 2003.

Such an extension would have dashed the hopes of politicians forming new parties to challenge Obasanjo's ruling People's Democratic Party.

c. Government sacks corrupt judges: Zamfara government has dismissed 11 traditional rulers, four sharia court judges and five civil servants on the recommendation of the state Anti-corruption Commission, it was reported, May 6.

The chairman of the commission, Alhaji Aliyu Mohammed, who made the disclosure to newsmen in Gusau, the state capital, said the dismissed officers were found guilty of corrupt practices as a result of complaints and petitions against them from members of the public.

He stated that the commission had within the period under review received and disposed of over 3,000 cases.

According to him, the commission has also collected N10 million cash from various individuals who were bribed by contractors but decided to hand over the money to the commission because of their fear of God.

Mohammed said Governor Ahmed Sani was one of the people who returned the money, pointing out that he (governor) collected the money and a car from contractors but later handed the money over.

d. 20 killed in political violence: At least 20 people died in Nigeria, May 1, when violence erupted between factions of the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP), in Jos, Plateau State, witnesses and hospital sources said.

The deaths occurred when the election of ward delegates for the congress of the party in the Nasarawa area degenerated into violence. The chaos spread to several other areas of the state capital as bands of youths armed with clubs, machetes and bottles engaged each other.

Some of the dead bodies and the wounded were taken to the Jos University Teaching Hospital. "I can confirm that we have mass casualties with some fatalities," Daniel Iya, the director of the hospital, told reporters. But he declined to give figures.

Another hospital source said that they received up to 20 bodies. "We had at the last count 20 people dead who were brought to the hospital, perhaps there could be more," the source said.

e. Abuja signs convention on terrorism: The Federal Republic of Nigeria signed the OAU Convention on the prevention and combating of terrorism, it was reported, May 3.

Signing the convention on behalf of his government, the permanent representative of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to the OAU, J.K. Shinkaiye stated that Nigeria would soon ratify the convention.

He said that President Olusegun Obasanjo and the Federal Executive Council have approved the ratification of the convention because of the great importance the Nigerian government attached to the fight against terrorism.

(SOURCE: *Asian Age*, New Delhi, *Statesman*, Calcutta and *Post Express*, Lagos)

RWANDA

a. Attackers boasted about their killings, witness claims: A group of attackers who raided the Mugonero Adventist Church Complex, April 16, 1994 killed refugees and looted property, and then bragged about their actions, a witness told judges at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), April 24.

The witness—identified only as "6" -- is testifying as the 16th defence witness for Elizaphan Ntakirutimana and his son Gerard, who are charged with genocide and crimes against humanity.

Elizaphan, who was a pastor at the church complex, and Gerard, who served as a doctor at the hospital in the complex, have denied the charges.

Witness 6 told the court: "I heard noises like grenades exploding and noises of people shouting. We saw people coming from that direction [of the church complex] with beds and mattresses they had looted from the hospital they were bragging about how they had killed people."

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Rwanda, page 714:a]

SIERRA LEONE

a. Amie Faye arrested in Freetown: Amie Faye, 23, former Miss Gambia, who also won the Miss Ecowas 1999 pageant, has been arrested on a drug-related offence in Freetown, it was reported, April 29.

Amie Faye and her companion Kajally Jallow were arraigned, April 23, before Magistrate Claudia Taylor at the Freetown Magistrates' Court No 1, on charges of unlawful possession of a large quantity of substances alleged to be cannabis.

According to police sources in Freetown, the former beauty queen and her companion were arrested, April 18, by police detectives at the Lungi International Airport while attempting to smuggle two suitcases containing 50 packets of cannabis commonly known as Jamba, to the United Kingdom.

Sources disclosed that the two were arrested while they were in transit to London from Freetown.

b. Aggrieved teachers barricade union president: Festus Minah, current president of the Sierra Leone Teachers Union, was attacked, Feb 29, when a group of aggrieved teachers stormed the ministry of education.

They were protesting against the delay in the settlement of their backlog of salaries.

Eyewitness, Mustapha Jamiru told *Standard Times* that Minah was about to park his car by the ministry of education when the teachers stormed his car and violently forced him out.

Minah had initially come to the ministry to discuss several issues pertaining to the general welfare of teachers in the country, including the backlog issue.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SOMALIA

a. Somaliland President dies in S. African hospital: The president of Somalia's breakaway enclave of Somaliland, Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, died in a Pretoria military hospital, May 3.

Analysts warned that his death would create a temporary power vacuum in the enclave, but said it was unlikely to lead to deeper turmoil in the wider Somalia.

The self-declared republic of Somaliland is a relatively stable enclave in otherwise anarchic Somalia. It declared its independence from Somalia in 1991, but it has not been recognised internationally.

"We can confirm that he has passed away at one military hospital. He was in South Africa on humanitarian grounds," foreign affairs spokesman Ronnis Mamoepa said.

"The government expresses its condolences to Somaliland and its people," the South African government said in a statement.

Somaliland appoints new president: Somaliland began a week-long period of national mourning, May 4.

Egal died, May 3, in South Africa from complications following surgery, the South African foreign ministry said.

Senior Somaliland officials have named as his successor the Vice-President, Dahir Riyale Kahin.

Kahin was appointed President, May 3, at an emergency meeting in the republic's capital Hargeisa, government officials said.

Somaliland, a former British colony in the northwestern section of war-torn Somalia, declared itself independent in 1993 after a referendum.

Egal was Somaliland's president throughout.

b. UN staff member kidnapped in Mogadishu: A national officer working for the UN Development Programme (UNDP) in Mogadishu was kidnapped by gunmen, April 28.

In a statement, the office of the UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia confirmed that the employee, Professor Muhammad Ali Aborkor, was abducted, April 28, by "persons unknown in the vicinity of K4 [in southern Mogadishu]".

The statement said the UN team for Somalia was working to establish contact with the kidnappers "in order to ascertain his condition and whereabouts, and to ensure his safe release".

Humanitarian sources in Mogadishu said Aborkor was travelling on a bus on his way to his house in the Medina district of southwest Mogadishu, "when gunmen who were riding in the same bus kidnapped him at around 4:30 p.m. local time".

It is unclear why Aborkor was kidnapped, where he is being held and by whom. "We have no idea where he has been taken to," the source said.

c. Over 30,000 refugees to go home: The UN refugee agency (UNHCR) is planning to repatriate 35,000 Somali refugees from Ethiopia, it was reported, April 24.

Zobida Hassim-Ashagrie, the UNHCR representative in Ethiopia, said only those who volunteered would be assisted. "Repatriation is a voluntary thing," she said, April 24. "So a refugee has to say yes I want to go home. If there is any fear of persecution then they cannot go home."

There are currently about 154,000 refugees in some nine camps in Ethiopia - mainly Sudanese, Somalis and Eritreans. Tens of thousands have fled the wars that have blighted the Horn of Africa. In 2001 alone, UNHCR repatriated 53,000 people.

"If you have no more conflicts then you would have no more refugees," Zobida added. "Refugees in this region are the consequence of conflict and civil strife."

Each repatriated refugee is given nine months' worth of food and 330 Ethiopian birr (around US \$39) to start a new life. UNHCR also helps with plastic sheeting and jerry cans to carry water.

d. Cholera kills 32 in Puntland: At least 32 people have been killed in an outbreak of cholera in Bosaso, the commercial capital of the self-declared autonomous region of Puntland, an official of the World Health Organisation (WHO) said, April 29.

Cholera is endemic in Somalia, and the current outbreak – which began on April 16—was caused by contaminated water wells due to flooding after heavy rains in the area.

A cholera treatment centre was set up at Bosaso's general hospital "immediately after the first reported cases", the official said. A regional cholera task force was activated by the local authorities in collaboration with WHO, the United Nations Children's Fund, Action Africa Hilfe and Medecins Sans Frontieres-Holland.

The WHO official said that by April 26, there had been 494 cases, with 32 confirmed deaths. He said chlorination activities were in progress, and dispensing facilities for oral rehydration had been set up across the city.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SOUTH AFRICA

a. Govt goes to court in the AIDS battle: South Africa's government went to the highest court, May 1, in a legal battle over whether it has a constitutional duty to give anti-AIDS drugs to thousands of HIV-positive pregnant women.

AIDS activists are calling the case one of the most important in post-apartheid South Africa.

The country has the world's highest number of people living with HIV-AIDS, but its government had provoked an international controversy by questioning the link between HIV and AIDS and blocking wide access to drugs it termed costly and toxic.

The government, which announced some shifts in its AIDS policy in April is appealing a lower court order in December 2001, compelling it to offer pregnant women immediate access to zidovudine, a drug said to cut mother-to-child transmission of the deadly disease by half.

Between 70,000 and 100,000 babies are born HIV-positive in South Africa each year and aid groups estimate the country will have nearly one million orphans by 2005.

"It has quite far-reaching implications. Not just in terms of access to health care services, but also potentially other social and economic rights", Mark Heywood, spokesman for the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC), an anti-AIDS group that has led the fight for zidovudine.

At the heart of the government's appeal will be the issue of separation of powers between the judiciary and the executive and whether a court can dictate use of a particular drug.

[Background Info. South Africa, page 668:a]

b. Cop killer arrested in Boksburg: An 18-year-old man was arrested, May 5, in connection with the murder of a Kempton Park policeman who was robbed and killed in April, East Rand police said.

Spokeswoman Anneline Prinsloo said the man and his accomplice, a 24-year-old man, were arrested after they opened fire on the police in Boksburg.

The man allegedly shot Inspector NS Kekana in the chest and robbed him of his service pistol.

Kekana, was attacked by armed men at the intersection of 13th Avenue and Cayson Street in Boksburg North by two gunmen. They pulled him out of his vehicle and shot him in the chest.

The robbers then took his service pistol and ran off, leaving him lying next to his vehicle.

c. Alexandria AWB leader jailed for 23 years for murder: Former AWB commander and training officer Abram "Ampie", 36, was sentenced to 23 years in jail for the murder of his wife, Suzette Young, 40, and his 17-year-old stepson Wynand, by the Grahamstown High Court, May 2.

Judge Joss Jones found Young guilty of murder of Mrs Young and guilty of culpable homicide for Wynand's death in Alexandria on September 1, 2001.

The court heard that Young stormed the house, shooting Wynand dead as he sat on the doorstep. Once inside, he slapped Mrs Young, while she held their year-old infant in her arms and then shot her with a .38 revolver as she pleaded for her life.

Judge Jones called Young's actions "callous" and "cold-blooded".

Young showed no emotion while being sentenced but later said he was "not happy" with the sentence.

d. AngloGold back on top of SA gold pile: AngloGold has reclaimed its status as South Africa's largest gold producer by market capitalisation, it was reported, May 2.

Gold Fields, which briefly stripped AngloGold of its long-standing title in April, saw its market valuation drop to R59bn after reporting results that failed to please the market.

On the other hand AngloGold has outperformed the JSE's gold index since it published quarterlies, April 2, and is now valued at R65bn. AngloGold also remained Piet Viljoen's pick of the major South African gold stocks.

(SOURCE: *Statesman*, Calcutta and *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

SUDAN

a. New agreement for full diplomatic ties with Uganda: Uganda and Sudan have agreed to re-establish full diplomatic ties, which were severed in 1995 and to appoint full ambassadors to each other's countries, according to a joint government statement, April 27.

Ugandan foreign minister James Wapakhabulo and Sudanese foreign minister Mustafa Uthman Isma'il agreed in the Ugandan capital, Kampala, April 26, to "upgrade the level of diplomatic representation between their countries to the level of ambassadors, and to establish a joint ministerial committee" to supervise bilateral relations, the joint communique stated.

The Ugandan government agreed, according to the joint declaration in Kampala, "to expedite and maximise the Ugandan factor in the realisation of a sustainable peace in southern Sudan under the umbrella of IGAD [Inter-Governmental Authority on Development]."

b. Kony rebels kill 60 in Khartoum: Joseph Kony and his Lord's Resistance Army rebels, April 26, massacred at least 60 Sudanese who were in a funeral procession of an elder of the village in Agoro mountains, the army said, April 28.

"At least 60 people were shot point-blank after being forced to cut to pieces the corpse they were carrying. Before killing them, Kony rebels surrounded them and ordered them to cook the carcass in sorghum," army spokesman Major Shaban Bantariza said, April 28.

Bantariza said, "The helpless civilians wanted to buy their lives and please Kony by eating the human body. But shortly after being forced to eat at gun point, Kony ordered them killed." He said Sudanese fleeing from the scene told the UPDF that Kony accused the people in Agoro and Acholi hills of collaborating with the UPDF against him.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

TANZANIA

a. Shipment of 10 million condoms blocked: A shipment of 10 million condoms, imported by the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) for free distribution across Tanzania, is being held at Dar-es-Salaam harbour, awaiting clearance.

Confusion over the issue initially arose in March when the *Majira* local newspaper published an article saying the imported condoms had failed permeability tests. The article quoted a letter from the Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) to the Commissioner of Customs saying the condoms had failed the "water test", and therefore should not be allowed to enter the country.

However, according to the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), this is a misinterpretation of the tests

carried out. UNAIDS officials said there were two "water test" components, and this was where the confusion seemed to have arisen.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

TUNISIA

a. President Ben Ali receives human rights award: President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, May 1, received the first "Mediterranean Award" established by three European human rights leagues and the Rome-based institute of parliamentary studies and research.

At a ceremony held in Carthage, Tunisia, the Italian, Spanish and Catalan human rights leagues and the institute for parliamentary studies and research said their jury chaired by Italian human rights league President Pasquale Bandiera decided to honour the Tunisian President in "recognition for the outstanding process he has initiated towards social and economic modernisation" and for his "achievements as regards democratic development and the anchoring of the rule of law".

Speaking on this occasion, Professor Gaetana Pace (Italian Human Rights League - FIDH) noted that "children in Tunisia enjoy without distinction the right to free education. All young people enjoy equal opportunities in a society where only competence and knowledge are the only criteria for success and social progress."

b. Synagogue blast a criminal act, says Tunisia: The government has acknowledged that a deadly gas truck explosion near a historic synagogue was due to a criminal act.

The April 11 blast at the Ghriba synagogue on the resort island of Djeba was "a premeditated criminal act," the government said in a statement. The explosion left 16 people dead, including 11 German tourists.

The explosion was carried out by a Tunisian, identified as Nizar Naouar and an unidentified accomplice who also lived in the North African country, the statement said. The investigation is continuing. The acknowledgment came after the German interior minister, Otto Schily, ended a two-day visit to Tunisia, saying Germany was "100 per cent" convinced the blast was the result of a terrorist attack.

"Germany is now convinced that this was 100 per cent a criminal, terrorist act," Schily said in Tunis.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, Madras)

ZAMBIA

a. World Bank to support HIV/AIDS programme: The World Bank has pledged US \$42 million to help Zambia's anti-AIDS campaign, but disbursement of the funds will hinge on the response of parliament to a proposed new national HIV/AIDS policy.

The Zambian government and the World Bank reached agreement in April on a programme under which the Bank would provide the funds to the Zambia National Response to HIV/AIDS ZANARA) project.

However, this is predicated on the passing of legislation guaranteeing the provision of antiretroviral drugs to people who need them.

If passed into law, the HIV/AIDS Bill drafted by the Zambian government would also criminalise the deliberate spread of HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

"One of the conditions that have been set are [for the government] to ensure that anti-HIV/AIDS legislation is put in place," World Bank resident representative Laurence Clarke told reporters. "We are aware that when parliament sits in the next session, the government will table an HIV/AIDS Bill."

b. 'Public media doesn't need sympathy, needs support': Public media needs support and not sympathy from people, Press Association of Zambia (PAZA) president Hicks Sikazwe said, May 3.

Post deputy news editor Amos Malupenga said politicians should not limit journalists' freedom for fear of being exposed.

Speaking on a radio Phoenix programme to commemorate the World Press Freedom Day which fell, May 3, Sikazwe said the current media should not continue to be government owned but should be turned into public media.

"What we need is not sympathy at all. We need support," he said. Sikazwe said the private media had been made popular because of inadequacies of the public media. "The private media is what it is today because the public media has propped them up," he said.

Sikazwe said PAZA would reach out to members and government to sensitise them on need for media reforms. "Government should allow reforms in these institutions so that more people would have access to them," he said.

Sikazwe said the whole issue of media reform dated back to 1990 when Zambia embraced democracy. He said when Zambia decided to set democracy, one of the serious components was a free press. Sikazwe said the press which the country took over from the colonialists was not open and had so many laws that needed reforms.

(SOURCE: *Times of Zambia*, Lusaka)

ZIMBABWE

a. Mugabe declares drought national disaster: Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe, faced with national famine, has declared a "state of disaster" across the country, according to official documents, April 30.

The proclamation gives the government powers to take extraordinary measures to bring relief to over 600,000 people facing critical food shortages.

It also puts the government in a stronger position from which to make appeals to the international donor community for food aid, said aid agency officials.

The declaration lasts for three months and can be extended.

Like neighbouring countries Malawi and Zambia, Zimbabwe's summer crop of maize, the national staple, has been almost a total write-off after severe drought, the worst in 50 years, during the growing season.

4 m people in southern Africa hit: More than 4 million people in southern Africa are threatened by serious food shortages, because of declining food production caused by prolonged dry spells, floods and disruption of farming activities, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) said.

Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe are the worst afflicted, but the situation is also difficult in Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia and Swaziland. In Angola, FAO said the food situation remains precarious due to the long-running civil conflict.

It said 19 countries in the region are facing "exceptional food emergencies," for a variety of reasons ranging from civil strife, drought, excessive rain and flooding to population displacement. In southern Africa, "a food crisis looms over several countries following sharp falls in maize production in 2001 and unfavourable harvest prospects in 2002.

"Acute food shortages have emerged in Malawi, Zimbabwe and Zambia, where food reserves have been depleted and food prices have soared undermining access to food for large sections of their populations".

Maize production in Malawi declined by more than 33 per cent in 2001, mainly due to excessive rains and floods, coupled with reduced and late delivery of agricultural inputs, such as seeds and fertiliser.

[Background Info. Zimbabwe, page587:b]

b. Over 1,300 prisoners freed under amnesty: A total of 1,314 prisoners have so far been released from the country's 42 prisons under an amnesty which was granted by the government recently, it was reported, April 30.

The spokesman for the Zimbabwe Prison Service, Superintendent Frankie Meki, said, April 29, that the figure was made up of 1,165 males and 149 females.

"The process is rigorous and we have to make sure a prisoner is vetted thoroughly before being released," he said. This, he said, was being done to avoid releasing inmates who can later become a menace to society.

Out of the total figure, 539 were from Mashonaland, 244 Manicaland, 80 Midlands and Masvingo and 451 from the Matabeleland region.

Nearly 5,000 prisoners are expected to benefit from the amnesty as the government battles to reduce overcrowding in prisons. Others will be released in phases after thorough screening.

c. Press freedom day celebrated amid crack-down: Zimbabwe, May 3, joined the rest of the world in celebrating World Press Freedom Day amid a major crackdown on the independent Press.

Two *Daily News* reporters, Collin Chiwanza and Lloyd Mudiwa, were arrested and detained by the police over a story given to the paper by Enos Tadyanemhandu.

Andrew Meldrum, a correspondent of the British *Guardian* newspaper was also arrested and detained, May 1, over the same story.

The arrests were made despite revelations that Tadyanemhandu misled the paper and had conned other people before the latest incident.

Meanwhile, in his message to commemorate the event, Kofi Annan, the United Nations Secretary-General, said it should be dedicated to terrorism and media freedom.

He said: "Above all, it is dedicated to those courageous journalists who put themselves at serious risk, and sometimes pay the highest penalty, by exercising their profession." He said that in the past two years, more than 50 journalists had been killed while covering violent conflicts.

Guardian journalist arrested in Harare: The *Guardian's* correspondent in Zimbabwe, Andrew Meldrum, was arrested in Harare, May 1, for writing a story that allegedly breached the government's punitive media laws.

He has been charged with publishing false information and is being held at the capital's central police station. Meldrum, an American citizen who has worked in the country since 1980, was detained for his story on the supporter of Zimbabwe's opposition party who had, reportedly, been beheaded in front of her children by followers of President Robert Mugabe.

Zimbabwe editor gets Unesco prize: The 2002 Unesco/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom prize was presented by Unesco director-general Koichiro Matsuura to Zimbabwean journalist Geoffrey Nyarota, May 3.

Nyarota, 50, is the editor-in-chief of Zimbabwe's only independent daily newspaper, the *Daily News*. Despite many death threats and attacks against his paper, Nyarota has persisted in denouncing corruption and criminal activities.

[Background Info. Zimbabwe, page 719:c]

d. Mugabe supporters turn heat on Indians: About 12,000 people of Indian origin in Zimbabwe are now facing threats from supporters of President Robert Mugabe to hand over their property or risk having it seized, it was reported, April 25.

Ugandan leader, Idi Amin, summarily expelled 60,000 Asians, mostly Indians, from the country in August 1972 with most of them turning to Britain for asylum.

According to a report from Harare, Andrew Ndlovu, second-in-command of the National Liberation War Veterans' Association, said the movement had started "Operation Liberation" to seize Asian, mostly Indian, business properties.

"We want these Indians to surrender a certain percentage of their land to the government," he said, according to a report in *The Times*, London.

"Indians are not here to develop our country or to work with the government. They are economic looters". Much of Zimbabwe's Asian population is descended from families who arrived with white settlers late in the 19th century. Mostly affluent traders and professionals, they have remained largely apolitical, apart from a few who took public office in the ruling Zanu (PF) party.

Despite the Indian minority's low political profile, it has begun to be seen as a target of Zanu (PF). The threat from Ndlovu, a former renegade guerilla who is facing charges of incest and embezzling his movement of 10,000 pounds, was the most overt attack yet.

He accused Asians, a term used for the people of the Indian sub-continent, of creating a black market in critically short foreign currencies, refusing to attend Independence Day celebrations and owning vacant property "which they did not want to share with blacks".

The Herald said Ndlovu had also given Zimbabwe's Asians an ultimatum to reduce rents, to invest their money locally and to increase wages. For the past two years, Ndlovu's militia have been carrying out state-backed attacks on white-owned farms that are strangling the agricultural base of the economy.

Demonstrations by ruling party supporters over economic hardship in the western city of Bulawayo in 2002, took an overtly racist tone when they demanded action against alleged profiteering by Asian businessmen and carried banners that read "Amin was right".

According to the report, the threat has caused serious alarm within the Indian community in Zimbabwe.

(SOURCE: *Asian Age*, New Delhi, *Statesman*, Calcutta and *Independent*, Harare)

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ANGOLA

a. Invest in children to heal scars of conflicts, says UN: Post-war Angola must invest heavily in its children if it wants to consolidate and preserve its new-found peace, a senior UN official said in Luanda, May 13.

Under-secretary-General Olara Otunnu, the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflicts, said that if children were not a central focus during the post-war period, they could become "spoilers of peace"—as has happened elsewhere in the world.

"It is critical to invest in youth ... to give them training ... and to give them hope ... or they could become a sullen, bitter, alienated groups who undermine peace and the future," he said. "There are few priorities as important as investing in youth."

More than half of the estimated 4.28 million people displaced by the war in Angola are children and humanitarian agencies estimate that more than 100,000 have been separated from their families. During the last half of 2001 alone, more than 4,000 children were reported to be without their families in 17 of Angola's 18 provinces.

(SOURCE: *Times of Zambia*, Lusaka)

BENIN

a. Child labourers repatriated: Fifteen children from Benin have been repatriated to their home country, four years after they were brought to Ivory Coast to work as under-age labourers, Benin authorities told a news conference in Cotonou, May 13.

The boys and girls, aged between 11 and 18 years old, were brought to Ivory Coast in 1998 and 1999 by two Benin nationals, officials of the ministry of justice said.

They were taken to Soubre, 418 km west of Abidjan, where they worked as labourers in coffee and cocoa farms, street vendors, domestic hands, and helpers on construction sites, the officials added.

The children, the officials added, said they were promised 1.14 million FCFA (about US \$1,600) in return for four years of work.

But they were only given 50,000 FCFA (\$70), prompting them to run away. But they were apprehended by Ivorian police who informed Benin's embassy in Ivory Coast.

b. Detained magistrates send SOS to religious leaders in Cotonou: Twenty-four magistrates who have been languishing in a public prison since their arrest six months ago, have appealed to religious leaders for intervention, it was reported, May 13.

In what appeared to be a crackdown by Benin government on corruption in its judicial department, they were accused of corrupt practices and being in possession of stolen goods.

Since their arrests between December 2001 and January 2002, their salaries have been suspended and their bank accounts frozen. Another 60 people, mostly civil servants from the treasury department, are facing similar charges.

The magistrates locked in at Lokossa prison, some 120 kilometres west of Cotonou, have sent a joint letter of appeal to religious leaders and the civil society to come to their aid.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BURKINA FASO

a. Opposition makes significant gains in legislative elections: The ruling Congress for Democracy and Progress (CDP) saw its share of seats in Burkina Faso's 111-member parliament shrink from 91 to 52 per cent at legislative elections held, May 5.

Results released, May 12, by the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) gave the CDP 57 seats, while opposition parties took 54. The ruling party had previously held 101 seats.

Opposition politicians welcomed the results. "This shows the strength of my party and the opposition parties as a whole," Aly Coulibaly, campaign manager of the Alliance for Democracy and Federation/ African Democratic Rally (ADF/RDA), said.

The ADF/RDA obtained 17 seats while the Party for Democracy and Progress/Socialist party (PDP/PS) won 10. The remaining 27 seats went to 10 other opposition parties.

About 64 per cent of the three million registered voters turned out at the elections, the first in which a single ballot paper was used.

b. Meningitis shows downward trend: Burkina Faso recorded 1,368 deaths from meningitis out of 11,899 cases as on April 28, with a weekly case-fatality rate that indicated a downward trend in the epidemic, the World Health Organisation (WHO) reported, May 6.

Most new infections, the ministry of health reported recently, were of the W135 strain which was introduced into the country by African Muslim pilgrims to Mecca, Saudi Arabia, in 2000. Vaccines for W135 meningitis exist in limited quantities worldwide and at 35,000 to 40,000 francs CFA (US \$47 to \$53) a dose, the vaccines were expensive.

The emergence of W135, WHO said in an update on the disease, had major implications for public health in the African continent.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BURUNDI

a. US NGOs concerned over voluntary repatriation: A group of 10 American NGOs have expressed concern over the voluntary repatriation of Burundian refugees from Tanzania "at this time", it was reported, May 15.

In a statement issued, May 14, for the attention of the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the US government, the group (which includes refugee aid, resettlement and protection agencies) said: "Current conditions in Burundi do not appear conducive for refugee return."

This was, it said, because opposing parties had not agreed to a ceasefire, the political climate in Burundi appeared tense and the army remained mono-ethnically Tutsi. The conflict might arise when returnees tried to regain their land.

Since March, the UNHCR has aided the voluntary repatriation of at least 5,000 refugees, and registered at least another 560,000 for future transfer.

(SOURCE: *New Vision*, Kampala)

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

a. Curfew lifted a year after failed coup: Nearly one year after its imposition in the wake of a failed coup that shook Bangui, capital of the Central African Republic (CAR), a nationwide curfew was lifted, May 9.

Originally imposed on May 28, 2001 when soldiers loyal to former President Andre Kolingba launched an offensive against forces loyal to current President Ange-Felix Patasse, the curfew was scaled back on December 13, 2001.

Humanitarian sources in Bangui speculated that the timing of the decision was due in part to the fact that rebel soldiers who fled across the Ubangui River to Zongo in the neighbouring Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) have been relocated some 100 km from the riparian border and progressively disarmed, whereas previously, they remained an armed threat just across the river.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Central African Republic, page 602:a]

COMORO ISLANDS

a. Assoumani claims victory in presidential election: A newly-appointed electoral body in the Comoros, May 9, confirmed Azali Assoumani as the winner of the disputed presidential election held in April.

The commission of five magistrates announced that the former military strongman had secured 75 per cent of the votes.

Under the new constitution, the federal presidency is to rotate on a four-year basis between the three islands. The first federal President is to be elected from Grande Comore, in this case Assoumani. Each island will however have its own president but the federal president would have overall authority.

Colonel Azali, who first came to power in a coup in 1999, had earlier unilaterally declared himself the winner of the poll, despite claims by his rivals and independent observers that the vote lacked transparency.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Comoro Islands, page 722:a]

CONGO (DR)

a. Dozens 'dead' in uprising: Church officials have identified 50 dead from an action against rebels holding the eastern city of Kisangani, its Roman Catholic Archbishop said, May 19.

The dead, recovered from a Congo River tributary and elsewhere, include 33 Congolese civilians, Archbishop Laurent Monsengwo said.

In a Sunday sermon broadcast live from Kisangani's main cathedral, Monsengwo "condemned" the bloodshed of the past week in the rebel-held city.

"We deplore all kinds of violence, particularly when it is directed against the civilian population," he told worshippers.

Kisangani is held by Congolese rebels, the Congolese Rally for Democracy, backed by forces of neighbouring Rwanda.

Bloodshed started, May 15, when mutineers within the rebel movement seized a radio station and urged Kisangani's people to rise up against the rebels and their allies.

b. Major Gen. Kazini faces arrest: The Congo Probe Commission, May 13, rejected army commander Maj. Gen. James Kazini's apology for failing to appear to testify and ordered him to do so on May 20, or face arrest.

The commission, chaired by Justice David Porter, rejected a letter from Kazini. Porter said Kazini's was a "straight case of contempt" of the commission. The commission wants Kazini to testify over fresh UN allegations that he plundered Congo's wealth when he was commanding UPDF troops there.

Kazini, who has failed to appear before the commission several times, May 13, sent lawyers instead. Two of them were Captains Sam Mwase and Timothy Kanyogonya.

Mwase pleaded: "I have instructions first to deliver an apology from the army commander that he has not appeared not because of a deliberate act to frustrate the commission but because of circumstances beyond his control.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, Madras and *East African*, Nairobi)

EGYPT

a. 20 die in air disaster: An EgyptAir Boeing 737-500 with 55 passengers and crew on board crashed, May 7, as it was attempting to land at Tunis airport, killing at least 20 people, rescue workers and government officials said.

A witness to the crash said the plane came down in the Nahli area of Tunis in wet and foggy weather. The mountainous crash site was very difficult to reach, but rescue workers had managed to get to the scene and were evacuating the injured. "At least 20 of the passengers have died," one of the rescue workers said.

A senior Tunisian government official said some of the passengers on the EgyptAir flight 843 had survived and had been taken to hospital.

(SOURCE: *Telegraph*, Calcutta)

ERITREA

a. HRW demands "immediate release" of detained journalists and dissidents: The New York-based Human Rights Watch (HRW) has called on the Eritrean government to free immediately nine journalists detained in September 2001 following the government's imposition of a ban on independent publications, a press statement said, May 16.

The independent media were closed down after being accused of engaging in activities that "endangered national security and unity".

They were accused of carrying the opinions of government dissidents, 11 of whom are also in detention.

The nine, who were reporters, editors and publishers of Eritrea's private press, began a hunger strike in late March to protest against their detention without charge and, on April 3, "were transferred from Police Station One in Asmara to an undisclosed location", said the HRW statement.

HRW noted that international human rights law recognised the fundamental principles that detainees were entitled to be free of torture and mistreatment, and that no-one should be subjected to prolonged arbitrary detention by the government.

b. UNHCR ends refugee status for Eritreans: The United Nations is to end the refugee status of hundreds of thousands of Eritreans who have fled decades of fighting in their country, the UN said, May 8.

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) said they were no longer at risk from war - which has blighted the country for more than 30 years.

Refugee status was first granted to fleeing Eritreans in the early 1960s during their bitter war for independence, which was finally achieved in 1993. Then the war with Ethiopia broke out in May 1998 prompted more Eritreans to flee, until it ended in December 2000 after the two countries signed the Algiers peace agreement.

"I believe that these two groups of refugees from Eritrea should no longer have a fear of persecution or other reasons to continue to be regarded as refugees," said Ruud Lubbers, UN High Commissioner for Refugees. "They will therefore cease to be regarded as refugees by my office with effect from the end of this year."

(SOURCE: *Monitor*, Kampala)

ETHIOPIA

a. Police arrest Oromo students: Oromo students from the Addis Ababa University, May 13, clashed with police as they were heading to the office of the regional State to file their grievance on the killing and arrest of students in western Ethiopia.

In what the city government called an illegal demonstration, the Oromo students from the different faculties of the University marched to the office of President of the Regional State, Junedin Sado on Bole road but were dispersed by police, who rounded up over 200 of them and took them to the Kolfe police training camp, according to local newspaper reports.

One University student, meanwhile, told *Addis Tribune* that about half of the arrested students were released, May 15.

b. Major anti-HIV/AIDS campaign to be launched: A major campaign aimed at providing young people with HIV/AIDS counselling and testing is to be launched in Ethiopia.

The country has one of the largest populations living with HIV/AIDS in the world, according to statistics from the health ministry. About one million children have been orphaned by the virus, it was reported, May 14. Four main towns across the country where the rate of HIV/AIDS infection among the youth is almost one in six, or about 16 per cent, are to be targeted.

"Young people make up a third of Ethiopia's population and are the most affected by HIV/AIDS," said Mirgissa Kaba, acting head of the HIV/AIDS section of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

"Providing youth friendly, confidential counselling and testing is an essential part in the battle against HIV/AIDS. Young people themselves are important agents of change to combat the spread of this epidemic."

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

GABON

a. Ebola fever outbreak is over, says WHO: The Ebola haemorrhagic fever outbreak in Ogooue-Ivindo region of Gabon has ended, the World Health Organization (WHO) reported.

The last notified case died on March 19 and no cases have since been reported, it added, May 9.

"As of May 6, the Gabonese ministry of public health officially declared the end of the capital outbreak," WHO said. "No further cases have been reported for a period equivalent to twice the maximum incubation period for Ebola," it added. WHO did not mention the status of the outbreak in Republic of Congo.

The outbreak began in December 2001 and has mainly affected the Mekambo area, 600 km east of Libreville, and districts across the border in neighbouring Republic of Congo. On April 10, WHO said 65 confirmed cases including 53 deaths had been reported by the Gabonese ministry of health. In nearby Republic of Congo, 32 cases including 20 deaths had been reported as on March 29 in Mbomo district, in the western Cuvette region while 23 deaths were reported in Kelle district.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Gabon, page. 712:a]

GAMBIA

a. Media Bill criticised: The Committee to Protect Journalists based in New York and the World Association of Newspapers have criticised the National Media Commission Bill, describing it as a pernicious piece of legislation, it was reported, May 10.

In a communique released earlier, the CPJ lamented the fact that the proposed Commission would be state-dominated, arrogating to itself powers to try journalists who were found to have violated the code of ethics to be introduced by the

Commission. 'Over the past year, Gambian journalists have made successful efforts to regulate themselves. During the run-up to the presidential elections in October 2001, for example, the Gambia Press Union adopted a code of conduct for journalists. Partly as a result, the political coverage was some of the most balanced in the country's history.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

GHANA

a. 251 criminals arrested: Two hundred and fifty-one criminals, 105 from Accra and 146 from Tema, were arrested, May 10, in a joint military/police operation held simultaneously aimed at flushing out armed robbers and social miscreants.

Between 5:00am and 9:00am, the joint team comprising 600 security personnel, 300 each from the police and military, made a swoop in areas known to be hideouts of criminals in Accra and Tema. In Accra, the areas were Sukura, Korle-Bu, Kokomba market, James Town and Chorkor.

Among those arrested, 15 people were in possession of large quantities of dried leaves suspected to be Indian hemp, a couple at Sukura were found in possession of 144 Ghanaian passports, a woman had two rounds of AK 47 bullets, a multi-purpose holster and a mobile phone.

b. Court jails child kidnappers: Three friends who conspired to kidnap a 12-year-old boy for ritual purposes at Chipoli near Prampram were jailed 10 years each by the circuit tribunal, May 14.

Issah Seidu, farmer, Kwabena Konadu, teacher and nephew of the victim and Isaac Owusu Mensah, pleaded guilty to two counts of conspiracy to commit crime and kidnapping the boy.

They were convicted on their own plea.

The prosecution told the tribunal chaired by Roger C. Azumah that the three friends conspired to consult a fetish priest who could assist them and help them out of their financial predicament.

According to the prosecution, the fetish priest told the three friends that he would need human parts to prepare the charm for them.

(SOURCE: *Daily Graphic*, Accra)

KENYA

a. Angry CJ fights back criticism: Chief Justice Bernard Chunga, May 20, rubbished a report by Commonwealth judges who said they were alarmed by allegations of corruption and incompetence in the Kenyan judiciary.

In a hard hitting speech to magistrates, the CJ condemned the report as far-fetched, untrue and in bad taste.

Instead, the CJ accused the experts, including judges from Canada and Africa of disobeying protocol, judicial etiquette, ethics and "acting on rumours and cheap gossip".

An angry Chunga said the Kenyan judiciary was neither at crossroads nor rotten as alleged. However, he added that although corruption was widespread in the public, it would not be condoned in the judiciary.

b. New Vision agent killed: The *New Vision* distributor Edward Matovu was gunned down, May 18, by unidentified gunmen who raided his offices on Tom Mboya street in Nairobi where he operated under Bulemezi enterprises.

The motive of the murder has not been established, but the Nairobi Central police chief, Japheth Koome, said they were investigating the death.

Matovu was shot with one bullet which tore through his chest, killing him instantly. A source said the incident sent his workers into shock as their boss lay in a pool of blood.

"I am dying," were Matovu's last words before he succumbed to the injuries, one of his employees told *The New Vision*.

c. Anti-HIV/AIDS groups demand urgency to match crisis: AIDS organisations meeting in Nairobi, May 19, urged political, religious and community leaders to step up the fight against the disease, and provide better leadership and guidance to society.

"The current budgets and support levels do not reflect the urgency of the pandemic," the activist organisations asserted, pointing out that the disease had now infected some 2.2 million people in the country, and was claiming 700 lives a day.

The organisations urged Kenya's leaders to address structural problems in the health sector, fight discrimination against HIV-infected people, and help society overcome the stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS issues.

They also demanded the speedy introduction of cheaper, generic AIDS drugs as provided under in the new Industrial Property Act, which became law in Kenya on May 1.

d. Over 27,000 displaced by floods in Tana River: The number of Pokomo farmers and Orma pastoralists displaced in Tana River district continues to rise amid fears of a flood disaster, it was reported, May 18.

The number of those displaced rose to 27,000 by May 17, up from 10,000 as the River Tana continued to swell.

The situation, which has also cut off transport to Lamu and Garsen areas, is said to be worsening. River Tana is also highly infested by crocodiles which are now posing great danger to livestock and human lives.

Administration officials in the district have been kept on high alert and are closely monitoring the situation.

e. Action against teachers: In a move to rein in on cheating in national examinations, the government has interdicted more than 60 teachers suspected to have abetted in the 2001 Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examination, it was reported, May 18.

According to the Teachers Service Commission (TSC), the employer for the country's 240,000 teachers, the 66 teachers were supervisors and invigilators. A few of them are head teachers.

They were interdicted following recommendations by district education officers, provincial directors of education and the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC).

TSC public relations officer, Patrick Birgen, said their cases would be programmed for hearing before a disciplinary committee and each case would be determined on its own merit.

If it is proved that they assisted students to cheat, or that they were negligent, they will either be suspended from service for some time or dismissed altogether.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

LIBERIA

a. Assault on Monrovia: Mortar and artillery boomed across Monrovia, May 13, as government troops battled against rebels.

The defence minister, Daniel Chea, confirmed Arthington, hometown of President Charles Taylor, came under assault, May 13.

The thunder of artillery and mortar on the hilltop town rolled across nearby Monrovia, causing pandemonium. Merchants locked stores to run home and frantic parents left home and offices to search for their children.

The rebels are believed to be on the losing side in Liberia's ruinous 1989-96 civil war, which ended with Taylor, the militia leader who launched the war, taking power in 1997 elections.

The rebels, fighters in shadowy movement calling itself Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy, six days ago launched their boldest and most concerted attacks in what had been a three-year campaign of hit-and-run attacks.

At Least 40,000 displaced in fighting: At least 40,000 people have been displaced in Liberia by the latest fighting between government troops and rebels in central Bong County, humanitarian sources in Monrovia said, May 10.

More displacement was expected as the fighting intensified around the town of Gbarnga, 160 km north of Monrovia, the sources added. The majority of the displaced were moving

south to Margibi County, while a few were moving into Nimba County. The fighting, May 10, had reportedly spread to several areas on the outskirts of Gbarnga. A government military camp housing the engineering and artillery base was overrun by the rebels, news agencies reported.

At least 900 students and teachers from Cuttington University College, the second largest University in Liberia, were evacuated by a police convoy to Monrovia, May 7, sources said. Fleeing residents, they added, spoke of heavy gun fire coming from the town.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

MALAGASY

a. Court declares Ravalomanana new President: A court, May 13, declared Marc Ravalomanana the winner of disputed polls.

Following a four-month leadership crisis sparked by allegations of rigging in the December 2001 elections, the High Constitutional Court said a recount showed Ravalomanana had won an outright majority and was officially declared President.

(See Analysis, page 743)

Ratsiraka, who agreed to the recount earlier said, May 12, that the court was biased and that he would disregard the ruling, prompting warnings from analysts that the crisis on the Indian Ocean island could lead to further bloodshed.

Violence flares as peace talks are postponed: Analysts and NGOs, May 13, warned of a wider and more vicious confrontation if no political solution is found soon.

Six people were killed and many others injured over the weekend in a fresh outbreak of violence in the north-western town of Mahajanga. Local news reports said the civil strife erupted after supporters of ex-President Didier Ratsiraka attacked members of ethnic groups they accused of favouring new President Marc Ravalomanana.

The report added that pro-Ratsiraka loyalists looted and torched shops and houses in a district populated by Merinas, the ethnic group that predominates in the highlands, from where Ravalomanana came.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info: Malagasy, page 725:a]

MALAWI

a. Two confess to murdering German tourist: Two Malawian nationals have come forward and confessed to killing a German tourist, it was reported, May 20.

They said they found Nathalie Toumi, 22, of Stuttgart taking photographs of birds on a roadside in Cape Maclear forest near

the southern resort town of Mangochi on May 12 and stabbed and strangled her when she refused to give them money.

They then stole her bicycle, camera and travel bags, which they hid in a maize field. Police have recovered all the items, said police inspector general Joseph Aironi, May 20. Toumi had been cycling across Africa. She had left Germany in September 2001. She entered Malawi from Tanzania on April 22.

b. Three million in need of food aid: While the present harvest period had eased Malawi's food crisis, more than three million people are still in need of urgent food aid, humanitarian workers said, May 17.

In February, the government said that seven million people out of a population of 10 million had no food. Floods, drought and a government decision to sell off its grain reserves—arguing that they were old—contributed to the food crisis. A senior aid agency official said: "There were seven million people in need then, at that time there was a crisis because maize had not been harvested. Now maize has been harvested.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MALI

a. Constitutional court cancels 0.5m votes, confirms poll result: Mali's Constitutional Court has ruled that over half a million votes cast in Mali's presidential election 11 days ago are invalid but the results of the poll, provisionally announced, May 3, remain unchanged.

Those results had already given first and second place respectively to former military leader Amadou Toumani Toure (known as ATT and standing as an independent) and the governing Alliance for Democracy in Mali (Adema) party's Soumaila Cisse. The two men now go forward to compete in a second round run-off, May 12.

The decision means that Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, or "IBK", who got in third place and had alleged gross rigging of the poll, is out of the race. The court's revised results put ATT in the lead with 28.70 per cent, Cisse second with 21.30 per cent, 1.5 percentage points less than in the provisional results, and IBK third with 21.03 per cent—just 4,000 votes behind Cisse.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Mali, page 713:a]

MAURITANIA

a. Lack of funds delays WFP emergency operation: More than a month after launching a US \$7.5 million appeal for drought and rain victims, the World Food Programme had not received sufficient contributions to begin the emergency operation, it was reported, May 14.

WFP country director, Philippe Guyon-Le Bouffy, said Nouakchott, that Finland and Italy were the only two countries that had so far responded to the appeal launched in early April. Finland donated US \$200,000 and Italy gave about \$91,000 (100,000 euros), he said. The operation, he said, which was slated to begin in April would not start until the organisation received sufficient funds to purchase the necessary aid items, including rice, salt and cooking oil.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MAURITIUS

a. Life term for Kenyan woman for smuggling drugs: A Kenyan woman has been jailed for life in Mauritius for smuggling heroin into the island, it was reported, May 16.

Ms Setteena Idriss Abdalla will stay behind bars until 2032 because under Mauritian law, a life sentence is equivalent to a 30-year jail term. That brought to 92 the number of Kenyans arrested or jailed in foreign countries for trafficking in marijuana, heroin, cocaine and mandrax since 1984.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MOZAMBIQUE

a. UK writes off US \$152 million debt: Britain announced, May 16, that it had written off all the debts owed by Mozambique.

The US \$152 million was scrapped under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) debt relief scheme, British embassy officials in Maputo said.

Minister for finance and planning Luisa Dias Diogo said: "The forgiveness is crucial in delivering Mozambique's Action Plan for the Reduction of Absolute Poverty.

"The savings will allow us to spend more money on education, health, infrastructure and rural development. Eighty per cent of the population depends on agriculture as a primary source of income," she added.

b. 'New port for Maputo to go ahead': The Mozambican government said, May 16, plans to build a US\$520 million new deep-water harbour in the south would go ahead despite protests that there were two major ports nearby and the area was environmentally sensitive.

The plan for the harbour includes the building of a passenger terminal at Ponta Dobela, which is 20 km north of the tourist resort of Ponta do Ouro and an inland industrial free trade zone adjacent to the Maputo elephant reserve. The proposed port at Dobela, which will have a cargo handling facility of 300,000 tonnes, is about 100 km south of the Maputo harbour which handles cargo for Mozambique's neighbours.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

NIGERIA

a. \$100,000 recovered from EAS aircraft victim: The sum of \$100,000 belonging to a passenger in the ill-fated EAS Airline 4225 that crashed at Gwammaja quarters of Kano metropolis has been recovered and will be handed over to the family of the deceased.

Managing Director of EAS Airline, Captain Idris Wada told the Senate Committee on Aviation sitting in Kano, May 18, that the money is currently with the police and efforts is being made to notify the family of the victim to collect it.

Wada told the committee under the chairmanship of Senator Idris Kuta that the aircraft that crashed on May 4 was acquired in July 2001 which was built in 1980.

He said that the aircraft was in good condition when it was delivered to his company and all the necessary checks and maintenance were done on the aircraft before its ill-fated flight to Kano.

[Background Info. Nigeria, page 728:a]

b. Ogoni clashes leave 15 dead: At least 15 people were killed and hundreds displaced in clashes between two communities of the minority Ogoni ethnic group in Nigeria's southern oil region, residents said, May 14.

Catholic Church officials said about 100 people who fled the clashes had taken refuge at the main parish church in the nearby city of Port Harcourt, where they were provided some relief assistance.

The clashes over ownership of parts of Bori, the main town of the 500,000 strong Ogoni in the Niger Delta, had the Yege and Lakpor communities engaged in reprisal attacks recently. Several houses were also destroyed.

Armed policemen were deployed to the area to stop the violence and a meeting of traditional rulers, community leaders and youth groups was convened, May 14, to mediate an end to crisis in the area.

(SOURCE: *Post Express*, Nairobi)

RWANDA

a. Mother and son drove refugees for massacre, witness claims: Genocide suspects Pauline Nyiramasuhuko and her son Arsene Ntahobali drove ethnic Tutsi refugees from the Butare governor's office to an unknown destination during the 1994 genocide, a witness claimed before the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), May 20.

The witness—identified only as "TK"—claimed that Nyiramasuhuko rode in the vehicle carrying refugees, driven by Ntahobali, escorted by militiamen.

TK is the 11th prosecution witness in the so-called "Butare Trial," which began in June 2001. The trial resumed, May 20, after it was adjourned on April 4 to facilitate the hearing of an alternate trial.

Genocide suspect Andre Ntagerura's wife testifies in his defence: Leoncie Bongwa, wife of genocide suspect Andre Ntagerura, May 20, testified in defence of her husband before the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.

Ntagerura was a minister of transport and communication in Rwanda during the 1994 genocide.

Bongwa is the 24th witness for Ntagerura, one of the three defendants in the so-called "Cyangugu Trial." Ntagerura is jointly tried with Emmanuel Bagambiki, a former governor of Cyangugu Province and Samuel Imanishimwe, former commander of the Cyangugu military barracks. All three have denied charges of genocide and crimes against humanity.

Led by Benoit Henry of Canada, lead counsel for Ntagerura, Bongwa testified that her mother is ethnic Tutsi and that she was born in Karangera commune in Cyangugu Province.

Former military officer arrested in Belgium: Former commander of the prestigious High Military school of Rwanda "Ecole Supérieure Militaire" (ESM), Brig Gen Lionidas Rusatira was arrested, May 15, in Belgium on charges related to the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.

Rusatira was arrested at the request of the prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, Carla Del Ponte.

Rusatira is charged with the killings of ethnic Tutsis, who had taken refuge at the "Ecole Technique Officielle (ETO)" institute of technology in the Rwandan capital Kigali.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Rwanda, page 727:a]

SENEGAL

a. At Least 1,500 flee fighting in Casamance: At least 1,500 refugees fleeing renewed fighting between government troops and rebels in the province of Casamance have crossed into The Gambia, Red Cross officials said.

Most of them were women and children, the officials said, May 7.

The fighting followed an attack on a convoy carrying supporters of Senegal's ruling party, the Parti Democratique Senegalais (PDS), who were touring Casamance as part of a political campaign ahead of municipal elections due on May 12. The government blamed the attack on rebels of the Casamance Democratic Forces Movement (French acronym MFDC).

At least eight PDS supporters were reported to have died in the attack, the government said. It occurred near the villages of Diouloulou and Diana at Casamance province, close to the border with The Gambia.

The head of The Gambia Red Cross, Andrew Jarju, who visited the border areas, said fighting was continuing and the sound of heavy gunfire could be heard several kilometres away. Red Cross volunteers had established an immediate presence and were trying to provide emergency assistance to the refugees.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SIERRA LEONE

a. Kabbah sworn in President again: Ahmed Tejan Kabbah was sworn in again as Sierra Leone's President, May 19.

He appealed to the people to unite behind him and rebuild after 10 years of civil war.

Kabbah took office for a new five-year term after scooping more than 70 per cent of the vote in the first presidential and parliamentary elections since the end of the war claimed 200,000 lives.

"The people have spoken and made the most far-reaching decisions in the current history of Sierra Leone," he said, hailing the peaceful manner in which the polls were conducted.

In his swearing-in speech, the 70-year-old leader called for unity and pledged to battle corruption and hunger and improve human rights in the impoverished country.

"I appeal to you, whatever, your party affiliation or party symbol or ideology, to join me in building a new coalition for national development," Kabbah said.

Large turn-out: Long, winding lines of voters formed before dawn, May 14, as Sierra Leoneans cast ballots in elections after 10 years of savage fighting.

The President, Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, was the first person to cast his ballot at Rumors Entertainment Club, in the old colonial district near the presidential residence.

He was greeted with cheers and applause by 400 people who had already formed two winding lines at 7 am. Smiling and waving, he acknowledged the crowd but he did not speak to reporters.

The presidential and parliamentary elections are seen as a test of the country's hard-won peace.

Nine parties fielded presidential candidates, and 11 were vying for the 112 parliamentary seats.

Calling the vote a milestone, the UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, May 13, urged Sierra Leone's people "to exercise their right to vote in the same spirit of peace and tolerance".

Parties from across the political spectrum traded accusations of intimidation ahead of the vote. But excluding minor incidents, election officials said campaigning was unusually peaceful.

The last time a poll was held, in 1996, the rebels rejected the ballot and punished voters by chopping off their hands. That time, however, the Revolutionary United Front rebels have officially disarmed and are participating in the vote.

Their leader, Foday Sankoh, is in jail. But they are fielding another candidate, Pallo Bangura, a longtime political figure who admits little knowledge of their past crimes.

Kabbah's main challenger is Ernest Koroma, head of the opposition All People Congress, which governed the country for 14 years. Candidates also include Johnny Paul Koroma, a former junta leader once allied with the rebels who switched sides to defend Kabbah's government against the last major rebel offensive in May 2000.

Clashes ahead of polls: Earlier, street fighting erupted between supporters of rival political parties in the Sierra Leone's capital just three days before landmark elections.

UN peace-keepers fired warning shots into the air as clashes flared between stone-throwing supporters of the Revolutionary United Front Party (RUF) of former rebels, the ruling Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) and the opposition All People's Party (APP). Tensions remained high in the capital ahead of the presidential and parliamentary elections. The President, Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, widely tipped to win the presidential election after six turbulent years in office, appealed for calm as he addressed a massive rally of his SLPP party at Freetown's main stadium.

The 60,000-capacity stadium was packed and the supporters worked themselves up to a frenzy when Kabbah arrived.

"Security is the responsibility of all of us," Kabbah told his supporters. "Let us behave like civilised people....All ex-combatants who have come forward begging for forgiveness, let us receive them as brothers and sisters," he said.

"Some of us have been destroyed by them, but we are ready to forgive them," Garnett Sesay, a 30-year-old soccer player, who was among the crowds, said of the rebels—notorious for their signature atrocity of hacking off the hands, feet, noses, ears and lips of adults and children alike.

"Because we don't need fighting anymore," Sesay said. "We just need to build a beautiful Sierra Leone." Sesay jogged through streets of burned-out buildings with about 100 other Kabbah supporters with pictures of the incumbent pinned to their clothes. Thousands around them waved the palm- symbols of Kabbah's party. The day-long rally was the largest yet among a nine-candidates for Sierra Leone's presidential vote. The voters will also pick 112 members of Parliament.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, Madras and *Statesman*, Calcutta)

SOMALIA

a. At least a dozen people killed in inter-Abgal clashes: Over a dozen people were killed in inter-clan fighting in the Middle Shabelle region of south-central Somalia, it was reported, May 7.

The fighting, which was concentrated in the village of Mertugo, some 150 km north of Jowhar, was between two groups of the Abgal sub-clan of the Agon Yar.

The fighting broke out on May 3 and ended on May 5 after elders from Mogadishu intervened, a humanitarian source in Jowhar said.

The fighting reportedly started when officials named by the "governor" of Middle Shabelle, Muhammad Umar Habeb, to administer local affairs tried to collect taxes in the area.

"A group opposed to Habeb's administration confronted the officials and stopped them from collecting taxes" said the source in Jowhar.

"There is a split within the Agon Yar: one group supports Habeb and the other opposes him."

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SOUTH AFRICA

a. Amnesty under review: The South African government said, May 19, it was reviewing its policy of pardoning apartheid-era political offenders, but ruled out the possibility of granting them a general amnesty.

After all-race elections in 1994, the government established the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, a body aimed at healing the wounds of apartheid.

The commission, headed by the Nobel laureate, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, had the power to grant amnesty to those who committed human rights violations under apartheid.

The commission refused amnesty to more than 5,000 applicants, finding they had no political motive or had not fully disclosed details of their crimes.

The commission is due to conclude its work in June, but the government feels amnesty should still be considered for several hundred people who shunned the Truth Commission or whose applications were rejected.

They include members of the left wing Pan Africanist Congress party, the Zulu nationalist Inkatha Freedom Party and right wing militants.

"What is being looked at is an acceptable mechanism that will be in the ambit of our law and constitution," said a justice ministry spokesman.

Analysts say the government is moving toward the pardons to promote reconciliation, appease radicals on the left and the right and hold together a fragile governing alliance with the Inkatha Freedom Party.

b. Winnie Mandela under probe: A South African parliamentary committee said, May 9, that it would summon Ms Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, to explain how she lived such a lavish lifestyle on her MP's salary.

The flamboyant so-called "Mother of the Nation" has been plagued by controversy and is in trouble again over opposition allegations that she had not properly disclosed source of income in accordance with rules for parliamentarians.

"Notice must go out to her immediately, hopefully today," Fazela Mohammed, registrar for the Parliamentary Ethics Committee, said. She said no date had been set for the hearing by a seven-member panel.

Ms Madikizela-Mandela, 64, would be the first MP to face such a hearing in post-apartheid South Africa's Parliament.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, Madras and *Asian Age*, New Delhi)

[Background Info. South Africa, page 561:a]

TOGO

a. Seven judges to replace Electoral Commission: Togo's government announced, May 15, the names of the seven judges who would take over the functions of the national electoral commission.

The Constitutional Court confirmed the nominations on April 25, saying the electoral commission had created a national crisis by failing to organise legislative elections. The confirmations were made in the capital, Lome, the office of the Prime Minister said in a communique.

Togo's electoral code stipulates that if the commission (Commission Electorale Nationale Independante), becomes "inoperational or dysfunctional", the government can nominate a team of at least five judges to replace it.

The Constitutional Court however has to confirm that the commission is dysfunctional, the communique said.

The commission, whose membership included both opposition and government parties, had been beset by months of disagreements, accusations and counter-accusations.

b. Red Cross launches HIV/AIDS project: Togo Red Cross Association launched, May 8, a two-year project against the spread of HIV/AIDS, as part of a continental initiative by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

The education and sensitisation campaign targets those aged above 15, who are the country's most vulnerable. The Red Cross

also aims to provide income-generating projects to those living with the disease, and team up with religious, community and youth leaders to encourage the adoption of safe sex behavior, including use of condoms.

The project follows previous efforts made by the national Red Cross to combat the disease. After a 1993 project to promote condom use, the association conducted in 1997-1998 an information campaign for those working in the country's public transport sector.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

ZIMBABWE

a. Harare arrests three journalists: The Zimbabwean government arrested three journalists, May 16, from the country's only independent Sunday newspaper as it intensified its crackdown on the free press.

Newly appointed *Standard* editor Bornwell Chakaodza who is the former editor of the government-controlled *Herald* and two senior reporters, Farai Mutsaka and Fungayi Kanyuchi, were detained, May 16, in connection with two stories, May 12.

The first story said government had ordered military hardware and anti-riot equipment from Israel to combat civil protests, while the second claimed some police officers were involved in sex scandals with arrested prostitutes.

Journalists' arrest condemned: Three journalists from *The Standard* who were arrested, May 15, were granted bail, May 17, after a night in a crowded cell at the Harare Central police station.

The paper's editor, Bornwell Chakaodza, entertainment editor, Fungayi Kanyuchi and senior writer, Farai Mutsaka, were freed after Harare magistrate, Joyce Negonde ordered them to pay \$10 000 each.

Their cell contained 21 other people picked up by police for various crimes.

The three, who have been charged under the draconian Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, have been ordered to report to the police once every fortnight until June 3 when the case is to be tried.

The Act seeks to criminalise journalists going about their business of reporting the truth.

[Background Info. Zimbabwe, page 732:c]

b. MDC polling agent was murdered: Morgan Tsvangirai's election agent in Gokwe during the disputed March presidential election was murdered, a family spokesperson said, May 17.

Tipason Madhobha's body was found on May 2 in a stream under unclear circumstances. He had been missing for almost three weeks.

He was buried in Kufazvinei village. He was the polling agent for Tsvangirai at Sugwiza Primary School. But the police in Gokwe and Gweru refused to comment on the matter. The Midlands provincial police Press liaison officer, who only identified himself as Inspector Mandipaka, referred all questions to the police spokesman Assistant Commissioner Wayne Bvudzijena, who has kept his word about not speaking to The *Daily News*.

(SOURCE: *Independent*, Harare)

REGIONAL

a. Last Bushmen lose rights to be nomads: The Bushmen of the Kalahari, sub-Saharan Africa's last nomadic people, have lost a legal battle against being evicted from their ancient homeland, ending 50,000 years of a hunter-gathering lifestyle.

Deprived of water supplies, drought relief and medicines by the Botswana government, the last of the Bushmen have been forced to abandon life in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve and have been shipped to the New Xade resettlement village. Since leaving their traditional hunting grounds, it was reported, April 13.

More than 800 Bushmen, or Basarwa, as they are known in Botswana, together with their huts and meagre belongings, have been trucked out of the game reserve since January. Only 24 elderly diehards who refused to become part of the government's controversial "remote areas development programme", remain. More than 200 Bushmen had taken the government to court, complaining that their forced removal from their ancestral lands was unconstitutional. But their case was dismissed.

Many of the 1,000 Bushmen who voluntarily came to New Xade in 1997, when the village was created, appear to have made the transition from a nomadic to a pastoralist way of life.

Young boys who once would have spent days tracking wild game with bows and arrows in the arid bush now herd their

families' cattle and goats as part of its scheme to "modernise" the Bushmen. Schools, medical facilities and community centres have sprung up across the bleak, sandy settlement in an attempt to entice the Bushmen to stay. The New Xade resettlement effectively completes Botswana's programme to integrate the Bushmen into mainstream society. About 50,000 Bushmen and their families have moved to more than 600 purpose-built villages across the country over the past 20 years.

Created in 1961, five years before Botswana gained independence, the Central Kalahari Game Reserve—national park the size of Denmark—was designed to provide a refuge for the Bushmen and the country's wildlife.

But President Mogae insists that wildlife and the Bushmen can no longer co-exist. A nomadic lifestyle "is really not feasible any more," Mogae said. Critics of the Government's forced assimilation programme have accused Botswana of conducting a racist policy towards the Bushmen, the original inhabitants of Southern Africa, who were widely looked down upon by the region's dominant Bantu-speaking people.

The Government has also been accused of evicting the Bushmen to prevent them making land claims; should diamonds ever be discovered in the reserve. Earlier, the UN condemned Mogae's government for "endangering the survival of a distinct people". The government insists, however, that it is merely doing the best for people who cannot forever remain nomadic. The lawyers intend to refile the Bushmen's case.

As their final saga plays itself out in the courts, fears first expressed by Laurens van der Post, whose books about the Bushmen helped to spread understanding of Southern Africa's nomadic people, appear finally to have become reality. Caught between tradition and modernity, the Bushmen are likely to get the worst of both worlds, losing their primitive freedoms while, at the same time, being stranded on the margins of modern society.

(SOURCE: *Times*, London and *Statesman*, Calcutta)

ANALYSIS

Land of two Presidents

President Marc Ravalomanana of Madagascar (Malagasy) tapped his manicured nails on a glass desktop in the capital, Antananarivo, and sighed.

Newly acquired power has proved problematic for the 45-year-old president. Located 150 km to the northeast, in the second city of Toamasina, another man who calls himself President, Didier Ratsiraka, the island's leader for 23 years, was plotting. The

inauguration of Ravalomanana recently was a coup d'état, he said.

But other than his entourage of heavies, there were no crowds out to show their support for Ratsiraka. With its port, factories, shops and bars mostly closed, his stronghold in Toamasina was deserted. Madagascar is being torn apart by this power struggle. Ravalomanana, who commands the support of

Antananarivo, claims he won in December 2001 election outright. Ratsiraka says he did not.

The impasse has left the island with two presidents, two cabinets, two capitals—and one suffering population.

To force his claim, Ratsiraka's ragged militiamen are mounting a partial blockade of Antananarivo, barring trucks or tankers from the city. In a couple of weeks its fuel will run dry and its power station, hospitals and schools will close.

Investors, uncertain which government to deal with, are also draining away. More than 65,000 jobs have been lost in the island's textile industry alone, says the World Bank, at an overall cost to one of the world's poorest countries of \$14m a day.

Life in the capital is slowly breaking down. "We can't buy petrol, you can hardly find sugar, many people are out of work," said Noro Adrianjafy, beside her shoe stall in the market place. "We feel ourselves being suffocated."

In his hilltop mansion, Ravalomanana sounded equally helpless. "Why won't they lift the blockades?" he asked. "You tell me." This was not in the script when Antananarivo's former mayor launched his election campaign six months ago.

Ratsiraka, an autocratic African leader of the old school, had never known much opposition. Some said the island's consensus culture, harmoniously melded by immigrants from Africa and Indonesia a thousand years ago, was not conducive to democracy.

But Ravalomanana, a peasant farmer who rose to become one of Madagascar's richest men in little more than a decade, has proved them wrong.

His business success inspired a people who grew poorer by a third during his rival's rule. His proficiency in their proverb-rich language endeared him to them.

And his private TV and radio station loosened Ratsiraka's grip on the flow of information.

"Modern technology and a determined, rich candidate finally awoke the people to their rights," said Pierre Rangera, an economist and retired diplomat. "The people sat up and learned to choose."

Ratsiraka used traditional local campaign methods. For village elders and chiefs there were bundles of notes, and a star prize of 1m Madagascar franc (\$140) was on offer for anyone able to name the longest word in the French dictionary.

Official results gave neither candidate the absolute majority needed. But with Ravalomanana claiming the vote count was rigged—and the island's churches agreeing—1million protesters took to the streets of Antananarivo.

In January and February they manned their own blockade, barring Ratsiraka's ministers from their offices.

Finally, marshalled by nuns, the people poured into the ministries, hurrying Ratsiraka and his cabinet from the capital, and putting Ravalomanana in his place.

In April, the leaders met in Senegal and agreed a recount. They vowed to abide by the result, and Ratsiraka agreed to lift the blockades. But when the result gave Ravalomanana a narrow absolute majority, Ratsiraka resolved to split the country.

But the Madagascans' reluctance to kill each other has been a much more heartening feature of the crisis. Despite defections to either camp, the army—whose 125 generals have never fought—has sat tight.

"This is a political problem, not a security issue," said General Olaf Zafitsiarendrika, the chief of staff. "Armies should never get involved in politics." So, in Brickaville, 250km east of Antananarivo, his soldiers stood idly by an illegal blockade of the main trade route. Those manning the barricades extorted tiny sums for carrying goods around the roadblock. "It is not the army's job to dismantle the blockades—that would be political statement," explained the general.

Despite Ratsiraka's boiling words, Ravalomanana's rousing inauguration in the capital's football stadium may force him to comply. Up to 200,000 people attended the ceremony while a million more danced in the streets outside. Western diplomats attended in a show of support.

Ratsiraka has now agreed to fresh peace talks in Senegal. But Senegal's President, Abdoulaye Wade, who helped broker the April peace deal, said recently that a meeting in Dakar scheduled had been postponed because an agenda for the talks was not yet agreed.

What Madagascar's 16 million people can expect from Ravalomanana's presidency is unclear.

—James Astill in *Guardian Weekly*, reproduced in *Deccan Herald*, Bangalore, May 2002

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ALGERIA

a. Absolute majority for ruling party: Algeria's ruling party won an absolute majority in parliamentary elections, according to results released, May 31.

The elections were boycotted by opposition forces and marred by rebel violence and ethnic Berber unrest.

Interior minister Nouredine Zerhouni said the National Liberation Front (FLN), which ruled the country's single-party state for nearly 30 years, won 199 of the 389 seats in the May 30 poll to elect a new Lower House of Parliament.

Zerhouni told a news conference the ruling National Democratic Rally (RND) came second with 48 seats, sharply down from 156 in the last chamber.

Widespread voter apathy, evident throughout a dull electoral campaign, meant that more than half the 18 million registered voters did not bother to cast their ballot.

Turnout at 47.49 per cent was a record low since multiparty elections were introduced in 1990 in the vast, energy-rich country which has been rocked by a brutal Islamic insurgency for a decade in which more than 100,000 people have died.

The election was overshadowed by violence, with Islamic rebels slaughtering 25 civilians hours before the vote, the latest in a series of massacres in the undeclared civil war.

The vote was the second since Islamic extremist groups launched their uprising in 1992 following the cancellation of a general election about to be won by the Islamic Salvation Front, a party now banned.

Four opposition parties, including the leading Socialist Forces Front (FFS) and Rally for Culture and Democracy (RCD), boycotted the vote. So did ethnic Berbers living in the volatile Kabylie region, scene of large anti-government protests for the past year.

The FLN, bringing in young technocrats and women, held 62 seats in the outgoing 381-strong chamber. It is the rump of the revolutionary guerilla movement that led the independence war against France from 1954 to 1962.

The high absention rate, with practically a no-show in Kabylie, made President Abdelaziz Bioutefika's claims that Algeria was on the road to peaceful change sound hollow, diplomats said.

"Few Algerians believe the system, seen as irremediably corrupt, can be changed from within or through elections always suspected of being fraudulent," a European diplomat said.

Failure of ruling establishment: Algeria's powerful ruling establishment appears to have squandered the opportunities that had opened up after their success in turning the country's political situation around in the late 1990s.

A low turnout in parliamentary elections, the boycott of the polls by opposition parties and the Berber minority and the escalating violence show that the Algerian establishment has not been able to provide any relief to a country that had been severely affected by a decade of horrendous civil war.

Less than 50 per cent of eligible voters took part in the parliamentary elections, according to figures given out by the interior ministry.

The poor turnout was partly due to the boycott calls issued by the opposition parties and the leaders of the Berber community. But the lack of better options, the lack of public confidence in Parliament's ability to deliver real benefits and dearth of hope in real progress also appears to have contributed to the public apathy towards the polls.

Rigging charge in poll: With little enthusiasm, Algerians began voting, May 30, in legislative elections dominated by calls for a boycott, accusations of a rigged vote, an ethnic Berber uprising and a decade-long insurgency by Islamic militants.

The government hoped the balloting would help bring a measure of democracy and calm to the violence-wracked country. But just hours before the vote, 23 people were massacred in a village 200 km from the capital, Algiers.

And on the streets, many say the outcome has been decided already: the coalition partners of the Prime Minister, Ali Benflis, will retain their domination of Parliament.

(SOURCE: *Indian Express*, New Delhi and *Hindu*, Madras)

ANGOLA

a. NSHR responds to appeals for aid: The National Society for Human Rights (NSHR) has heeded recent appeals for humanitarian assistance for demobilised UNITA troops, it was reported, May 30.

The rights group has donated 50 bags of maize meal worth N\$10,000, the organisation said in a statement. Around 70, 000 UNITA soldiers and their families are said to have assembled at demobilisation points in Angola where they have laid down their firearms. But the exercise is threatened by an acute shortage of food and other basic necessities.

NSHR executive director Phil ya Nangoloh told *The Namibian* he was awaiting a directive from the World Food Programme (WFP) on how it will transport the food to Angola.

b. UNITA welcomes suspension of travel sanctions: The UNITA has welcomed the lifting of a United Nations travel ban on its members, saying that the move is long overdue and will facilitate the party's political reorganisation, it was reported, May 22.

The Security Council lifted the ban for three months, May 17, but other sanctions against the former rebel movement remain in place until such time that Angola's peace process is consolidated, the resolution said.

General Lukamba Gato, head of UNITA's management committee said, May 21, that the move would enable UNITA to organise a congress and to elect a new leadership in the near future.

"The decision of the Security Council is welcomed because it now makes UNITA equal with its partner in the peace process and with other political parties ... This will free the party so that it can compete in order to find equality with other parties concerning the election programme," he said.

[Background Info. Angola, page 721:a]

c. Measles campaign launched: More than 150,000 Angolan children are to be vaccinated against measles through an emergency campaign in newly accessible Quartering Family Areas (QFAs), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) said in a press release, May 27

"We are already providing support in several provinces and continue today through MSF-Switzerland in Peso Velho quartering site," Mario Ferrari, UNICEF's representative said in a statement, May 24.

Vaccination campaigns are also underway in Sanza Pombo, Menongue, Londiumbali and Luena in Uige, Cuango Cubango, Huambo and Moxico provinces where children who have never before been vaccinated can now be reached.

Angola's ceasefire has allowed humanitarian assistance to reach communities previously cut off by the war. It has also led to the quartering of former rebel UNITA troops, and separately their families. But the Angolan government-run demobilisation operation has come under criticism over the limited amount of relief supplies available to UNITA troops and their families.

(SOURCE: *Namibian*, Windhoek)

BOTSWANA

a. Lady Ruth Khama dead: Lady Ruth Khama, 79, the wife of the founding president of Botswana, Sir Seretse Khama, died, May 23, at her home in Gaborone.

She had been fighting cancer for several years and after a period of remission the disease resurfaced six months ago.

Lady Khama's marriage was one that rattled the foundations of the apartheid system of legalised racial discrimination in South Africa. A de facto practice of discrimination occurred in many of Britain's colonies and protectorates.

It also made the African people of the Bamangwato tribe in the then Bechuanaland Protectorate examine their own prejudice against White people, the very prejudice the whole of Africa was fighting. They had to come to terms with their 'White Queen'.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BURUNDI

a. Court clears 34 accused of Teza tea factory massacre: A Bujumbura criminal court has declared innocent 34 leaders of a July 1996 attack on a tea factory in Burundi's Teza region, Muramvya province, that left about 100 dead, the local news agency Net Press reported, May 30.

News agencies and human rights groups at the time reported that a large number of Hutu rebels had attacked the plant, killing mainly Tutsis. The factory, six administrative buildings, 20 trucks and large quantities of tea were destroyed by fire.

Soon after the massacre, the army reportedly retaliated in the Bukeye and Kiganda areas, killing at least 500 people, according to Amnesty International. It called on all parties to the conflict in Burundi to take immediate measures to prevent killings of unarmed and defenceless civilians, to exercise restraint and to take steps to prevent reprisal killings.

(SOURCE: *New Vision*, Kampala)

CONGO

a. Electoral commission disqualifies 12 parliamentary candidates: The Republic of Congo's electoral commission has disqualified 12 parliamentary candidates for disrupting and defrauding the first-round of election commission president Charles Emile Apeesse announced, May 27.

While most disqualifications were said to favour President Denis Sassou-Nguesso's Parti Congolais du travail (the Congolese labour party), affected candidates included the president's brother, Maurice Nguesso; finance minister Mathias Ndzon and presidential aide Antoinette Nganongo Olou.

Fresh polls will be conducted in districts where voting was disrupted, May 26, as well as in several districts of the Pool region where voting was prevented by an ongoing conflict.

The turbulence had a serious impact on voter turnout, with government estimates citing "no more than 20 percent" of the eligible electorate having cast their ballots. However, the government did highlight that 300 women were among the 1,200 candidates competing for 137 seats in the national assembly.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

CONGO (DR)

a. Death squad kills 200: At least 200 people, many police and army officers, were killed in the city of Kisangani in east Congo by rebel commandos, it was reported, May 27.

Victims were tossed into the two rivers that flow through Kisangani or buried in mass graves, according to a report.

The killings were believed to be the work of the Amazulu death squad, a group of Congolese and Rwandan rebel commandos.

A little more than a week ago, Congolese army soldiers declared a mutiny and seized the main radio station in Kisangani. They called on the local population to kill Rwandan officials, but the soldiers were gone two hours later.

Kisangani is governed by rebels backed by the government of Rwanda, who accused the Congolese government and its allies of staging the mutiny to test the loyalty of army and police in Kisangani. Those who revealed themselves disloyal during the mutiny were targeted in the latest attacks, according to the Kisangani government. City officials said the latest attacks claimed only 39 lives.

About 150 victims have been pulled from the rivers and airport workers said there are more victims and two mass graves near the airport.

(SOURCE: *Statesman*, Calcutta)

[Background Info, Congo (DR), page 686, 711, 734]

IVORY COAST

a. Six jailed in connection with coup plot: Six men were jailed for terms of up to 20 years, May 30, for their involvement in a failed coup attempt in early 2001 in Ivory Coast.

Seven others were acquitted, the pro-state *Fraternite Matin* daily reported, May 31

At the end of the three-week long court case, four of the accused were found guilty of taking part in the alleged January 7-8 plot to overthrow President Laurent Gbagbo's government and of being part of an armed group.

Each received a 20-year sentence. Two others were given three-year jail terms for the illegal possession of firearms, the newspaper said.

During the attempted coup, overnight attacks were simultaneously launched against the state-owned radio and television stations, the country's largest gendarme camp and Gbagbo's home. Two gendarmes were killed and several others wounded.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Ivory Coast, page 319:a]

EGYPT

a. US was warned about Sept 11 attack by Laden: The Egyptian intelligence warned US officials about a week before September 11 that Osama Bin Laden's network was planning an operation against an American target, President Hosni Mubarak said in an interview, June 2.

Using a secret agent they had recruited who was in close contact with the Bin Laden organisation, Mubarak said, his intelligence chiefs tried unsuccessfully to halt the operation. Mubarak said his intelligence officials had no indication what the target would be and had no idea of the magnitude of the coming attack.

"We didn't know that such a thing could take place," he said, referring to the September 11 attacks.

"We thought it was an embassy, an airplane, something, the usual thing".

But, he added, to discover after the event that the terrorists were going to take airplanes and destroy buildings, "that is unbelievable".

Still Mubarak's disclosure represents the first time a foreign leader has said that an intelligence service had penetrated Bin Laden's network. Al-Qaeda to the extent that discussions about specific operations—and whether they could be halted or postponed—were under way.

Mubarak did not say whether he knew how American counterterrorism officials had reacted to the Egyptian warning, which a senior US intelligence official denied was received.

But Mubarak said he believed that security at the US embassy in Cairo was tightened in early September as a result of the warning.

Mubarak cited the warning as evidence that Egypt has become an increasingly valuable intelligence partner to the United States in the war against terrorism, especially since September 11. It seemed possible he was seeking to burnish Egypt's credentials.

'US agents penetrated Qaeda': US intelligence intercepted Al-Qaeda communications referring to a major attack before September 11 and agents had infiltrated the group, but the intercepts and field report did not specify when or where a strike might occur, *USA Today* reported, June 4.

Citing unnamed US officials, the newspaper reported that the disclosures are buried in 350,000 pages of documents turned over the CIA for congressional hearings on clues missed before the September 11 hijacked airliner attacks that killed some 3,000 people.

Among the clues are electronic intercepts as late as September 10 of Al-Qaeda members speaking cryptically of a major attack, the report said. The newspapers reported that two US intelligence officials paraphrasing the intercepts said they included such remarks as, "something big is happening", and "Tomorrow will be a great day for us".

The agents who infiltrated Al-Qaeda and its Taliban allies could not crack the tightly held secret of the September 11 plot, but did collect evidence that the United States was targeted, *USA Today* said, again citing intelligence officials.

The intercepts of conversations among suspected Al-Qaeda members in the weeks and days before the attacks are in 13,000 pages of material from the National Security Agency.

(SOURCE: *New York Times* and *Asian Age*, New Delhi)

ETHIOPIA

a. PM blasts western governments: Prime Minister Meles Zenawi launched, May 27, a stinging attack on western governments on the eve of a visit to Ethiopia by US treasury secretary Paul O'Neill.

Speaking at the opening of the Africa Development Bank (ADB) annual meeting, he accused the West of hypocrisy by calling on African countries to open up their markets, while imposing tariffs and handing out enormous subsidies to farmers.

The visit by O'Neill and Irish rock star Bono comes barely a week after US President George Bush signed a new farm law increasing dairy and crop subsidies by 67 per cent. The pair are on a 12-day, four nation, fact-finding tour of Africa to assess the effectiveness of development aid.

"They [western governments] are erecting tariff and non-tariff barriers and doling out enormous subsidies affecting the very products that we have comparative advantage in," Meles said. "This is clearly and blatantly hypocritical."

b. 15 killed in Awasa riots: At least 15 people were shot dead - including two policemen - and 25 injured after security forces and demonstrators clashed in southern Ethiopia, May 24, the federal authorities said.

Running battles broke out between the police and protesters who were demonstrating against a change in the political status of the regional capital Awasa.

The deaths mark the worst clashes between police and demonstrators since 39 people were killed and 250 wounded during the Addis Ababa University riots in April 2001.

State minister of information Netsannet Asfaw said IRIN that armed rioters had been drafted in from nearby towns, bent on looting shops and businesses in Awasa. She said that the protesters opened fire on the police who shot back in self-defence, and confirmed that 15 people had been killed.

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

GHANA

a. US treasury secretary in Accra: US treasury secretary Paul O'Neill and the Irish pop icon Bono flew into Accra, May 27.

The Republican and the rocker are due to spend two days in Ghana. Next stops are South Africa, Uganda and Ethiopia on a 10-day run through sub-Saharan Africa.

Bono's goal: Persuade the sometimes skeptical treasury secretary that Africa can and does put Western aid to good use. The idea of a joint trip was hatched a year ago, when the two men met in O'Neill's office.

Bono, who has campaigned for years to focus attention of rich nations on the plight of Africa, asked for the session with O'Neill, a vocal critic of previous aid programmes in Africa.

O'Neill has deplored them as a waste of billions of dollars. Initially reluctant, he finally agreed to meet Bono, and later said he was impressed by the Irish singer's knowledge of Africa's problems.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, Madras)

KENYA

a. Hundreds of foreigners arrested in Eastleigh: Hundreds of people, including children, were arrested in Eastleigh, an eastern suburb of Nairobi, May 30, in police crackdown on illegal foreigners.

Police arrested over 843 aliens, mostly from Somalia and Ethiopia, in the Kenyan capital, and recovered powerful communications equipment used by the aliens to communicate with relatives in their respective countries, the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) reported, May 30.

The arrests follow recent mysterious landing of an aircraft at Wilson Airport, Nairobi, with 21 Somalis allegedly being brought into Kenya illegally, for a fee - on board, which sparked a political

row about the possible violation of Kenyan airspace and the need for increased control of aliens in Kenya.

"At about 1 a.m. [local time: 2200 GMT], they [the police] arrived on 2nd street, breaking doors and windows. They went from door to door, destroying property, and rounding up everyone into trucks," one Ethiopian refugee said, May 31.

b. Seven militiamen rape woman at gunpoint: Seven Somali militiamen have raped a woman at gunpoint in Mandera town, it was reported, June 3.

The 25-year-old mother of one was raped as she looked after goats in Kamoro, four kilometres from Mandera town, on the Kenyan side but a stone's throw away from Bulla Hawa town in Somalia.

She was kicked and gun-butted and left bleeding in the incident. She was in shock and could not talk for two hours. Later, she was taken to Mandera District Hospital where she was admitted.

Twenty of the goats she was herding were stolen by the militiamen. Mandera has been teeming with thousands of refugees who have fled to the town from Bulla Hawa, following a raging war in the Horn of Africa country.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

LIBERIA

a. Rebels capture town north of Gbarnga: Rebels of Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) have captured the town of Garmou and again threatened the strategic cross-roads town of Gbarnga, a defence source said, June 1.

The rebels took Garmou, 180 kilometres northeast of Monrovia, and "still control Bellefenai, about 15 kilometres from Gbarnga, indicating that Gbarnga itself can be attacked anytime again," the source said.

(See Analysis, page 756)

The shadowy LURD movement, which launched an insurgency against President Charles Taylor's government about two years in the north close to the Guinean border, achieved a major coup when they captured and briefly occupied Gbarnga on May 12.

The town, 160 kilometres northeast of Monrovia, had been the stronghold of Taylor's former rebel movement during the brutal 1989-96 civil war that brought him to power.

80,000 displaced in Totota: More than 80,000 internally displaced people are reported to have sought refuge in Totota, about 60 kilometres from Monrovia, following fighting in the Gbarnga, it was reported, May 31.

Lutheran Bishop Sumoward Harris told reporters that the displaced, most of whom are said to be women, children and the elderly, are being given emergency relief assistance.

Bishop Harris stressed the need for more emergency relief assistance such as food, clothing and other materials.

[Background Info. Liberia, page 737:a]

b. Dogolea died of cancer: The minister of justice, May 30, released the autopsy reports for the late Vice President, Enoch Dogolea and the late youth and sports Minister Francois Massaquoi.

The autopsy report stated that Dogolea's death is in relation to a severe hypovolemia resulting from the rupture of oesophageal varices.

"It is a complication of the hepatocarcinoma (Cancer) with carthotic lesions," the autopsy read by the minister Varmah said.

Also, the report said the death of the late Dogolea is a natural one, attributable to digestive hemorrhage resulting as a complication of hepatocarcinoma (Cancer) on a cirrhotic liver.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

LIBYA

a. \$2.7 bn offered to Lockerbie victims: Libya has offered to pay \$2.7 billion to the families of the 270 victims of the Lockerbie bombing.

A Libyan intelligence officer has been convicted of planting the bomb that blew up a PanAm flight over the Scottish town of Lockerbie in 1988. The government of Muammar Gaddafi had laid down conditions for the release of the money, including the lifting of UN and US sanctions and the removal of Libya from the US list of countries sponsoring terrorism.

Each victim's family would receive \$10 million, but the money would only be handed over piecemeal—40 per cent when the United Nations sanctions are lifted; 40 per cent when US sanctions are lifted; and 20 per cent when Libya is taken off the US list of states sponsoring terrorism.

The law firm representing Libya has apparently sent a letter to the families of the victims saying that the money will be deposited in an escrow account in a non-American bank.

The money will be automatically released to a Plaintiffs' Committee Account in New York as Libya's conditions are met.

Libya has denied any role or culpability in the Lockerbie bombing but in January 2001, a three judge Scottish court sitting in the Netherlands ruled a member of Libya's security service guilty of the bombing that killed 259 passengers of the PanAm flight and 11 residents of Lockerbie.

Officially, neither the Bush administration nor the Libyan representatives in New York have commented on the reported

offer to settle the case. A State Department officials said the reported offer would not affect Washington's policy towards Libya "one iota". The United States and Britain have demanded that Libya not only accept full responsibility for the bombing but pay "appropriate" compensation to the victims of the families.

They want this done before the United Nations even considers the lifting of sanctions. More than the UN sanctions, what hurts Tripoli more is the set of commercial and financial sanctions imposed by the United States. The US has listed Libya as one of the seven States that sponsor terrorism.

US renews its list of terrorist states: The US, May 21, renewed its "state sponsor of terrorism" designation for Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Sudan and Syria, and identified Teheran as the "most active state sponsor of terrorism" in 2001.

In its annual Patterns of Global Terrorism report, the state department also said Tripoli and Khartoum were making the most progress toward ending their status as "rogue states".

"Sudan and Libya seem closest to understanding what they must do to get out of the terrorism business, and each has taken measures pointing it in the right direction," it said.

Sudan has boosted counterterrorism co-operation with the US, and Libya has repeatedly renounced terrorism and moved "to recast itself as a peacemaker".

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, Madras)

[Background Info. Libya, page 725:a]

MALAGASY

a. Ratsiraka calls off new talks until PM is released: Fresh talks between the two political rivals were dealt another blow, May 28, as former Malagasy President Didier Ratsiraka said he would not attend the planned meeting in Senegal until his erstwhile Prime Minister was released from house arrest.

President Marc Ravalomanana's supporters, May 27, raided the residence of former Prime Minister Tantely Andrianarivo and detained him. Andrianarivo has remained loyal to Ratsiraka.

Political analyst at the University of Madagascar, Olivier Razanatsoa, said: "It is not surprising that Ratsiraka has decided not to go ahead with the talks. Both of them [Ratsiraka and Ravalomanana] are trying to score points before they reach Dakar. It is part of a broader political bargaining strategy."

Fresh outbreak of violence threatens new peace talks: Fears were raised, May 27, that the latest outbreak of violence in the capital could derail a new round of peace talks due to start in Senegal.

Four soldiers loyal to former President Didier Ratsiraka were reportedly killed in a gun battle as supporters of Marc Ravalomanana raided the former Prime Minister's residence, the only government office still under the control of Ratsiraka in Antananarivo.

French news agency AFP reported that newly appointed Prime Minister Jacques Sylla placed his predecessor, Tantely Andrianarivo, under house arrest. But Andrianarivo was released after several hours.

The move by Ravalomanana's supporters was seen as the final step in consolidating Ravalomanana's government in the Indian Ocean Island.

Spectre of civil war looms: There was a steady build-up of soldiers in two of the provincial towns, May 23, as President Marc Ravalomanana reiterated his intention to take military action if the blockade of the capital, Antananarivo, was not dismantled within four days.

Aid agencies said that the southern town of Tulear, and Mahajanga in the north were "extremely tense" as armed forces seem to prepare for what is expected to be a crucial showdown between Ravalomanana's men and backers of former President Didier Ratsiraka.

Ravalomanana's minister of defence, Gen Jules Mamizara told the local daily newspaper *L'Express*, May 23, that "if any military do not obey orders by Sunday, the rebels or mutineers will be pursued and fought".

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Malagasy, page 738:a]

MALI

a. Toure is new President: Amadou Toumani Toure has officially been proclaimed the next President of Mali by the constitutional court, a month after the elections.

The whole electoral process was marred by many allegations of fraud, which led the court to annul huge amounts of votes. But he still won by a landslide 65% against 35% for his rival, Soumaila Cisse from the ruling Adema party in the second round, it was reported, May 27.

Toumani himself watched the court make the official announcement live on television at home. The court read through 47 official complaints of fraud it had to deal with before coming up with a final proclamation.

Within moments of the announcement, hundreds of people mobbed the gates of Amadou Toure's residence, eager to see the man who will be their President for the next five years.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Mali, page 738:a]

MOZAMBIQUE

a. Over 196 killed in rail disaster: The worst rail disaster in Mozambique's history claimed 196 lives after a railroad worker unsuccessfully used four large stones to keep a packed passenger train from sliding down a hill on May 25.

Funerals began for some of the 196 people killed in the crash, and health officials pleaded for blood donations for the 400 others who were injured. The crash of a train carrying passengers and freight to South Africa happened, May 25, at the town of Moamba, about 60 km north of the capital, Maputo.

The train developed a mechanical fault as it tried to climb a hill, so the driver disconnected the passenger section of the train, which was already partially up the hill, from the freight train, said Antonio Libombo, an official with the Mozambican Railway Company.

The driver wedged four large stones under the wheels of the passenger train to keep it from sliding backward and then drove the freight train back to a nearby station, Libombo said. However, the stones gave way and the passenger train barreled down the tracks into the freight train, he said.

"An investigation is still under way," Transport Minister Tomas Salomao said. "But at first glance, the crash was caused by a human error".

Rescue workers toiled throughout the day to free many victims who were trapped in the wreckage. By May 26, all the bodies had been removed and the wreckage was cleared, Salomao told Radio Mozambique. Regular train service was to restart on the tracks soon, he said.

President Joachim Chissano called the accident a national tragedy and declared three days of mourning. Flags flew at half mast and state radio and television played solemn music and funeral dirges. The mortuary at Maputo's main hospital was full and hospital administrations had to bring in containers to store the dead.

Hospital authorities said medics toiled through the night to treat the many wounded, including 22 in intensive care and 169 more in a high dependency unit.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg and *Statesman*, Calcutta)

NIGER

a. Journalists released after a week in jail for defamation: The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), May 29, welcomed the release from government custody of three leading Niger journalists who were arrested and detained on charges of defaming government officials.

CPJ strongly condemned the criminal prosecution of journalists for their work.

On May 17, police officers in the capital, Niamey, arrested Abdoulaye Tiemogo, publisher of the independent weekly *Le Canard Dechaini*.

According to local journalists contacted by CPJ, Tiemogo was arrested for comments made on May 11 during a special talk show he hosted on Tambara FM, a private radio station in Niamey.

During the show, which focused on corrupt government authorities who commit crimes with impunity, Tiemogo invited studio guests and listeners to voice their views on the country's embattled democratisation process.

(SOURCE: *Post Express*, Nairobi)

RWANDA

a. Tribunal agrees to open office in Kinshasa: The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) finally accepted a proposition by the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) government to open an office in the country, it was reported, June 2.

The Tribunal stated the move would allow the apprehension of as many genocide suspects as possible who are apparently in the Congo region.

Kinshasa had proposed the idea of an office on May 11, 2002, but the Tribunal spokesperson Nigerian Kingsley Moghalu indicated that the ICTR was not in a position to open one. Observers interpreted the response as a rejection of the Congolese proposition.

In an interview, May 31, on Radio Okapi, which is jointly run by Hirondelle Foundation and the United Nations Mission in the DRC, the ICTR Registrar Senegalese Adama Dieng, stated that the position of the Tribunal had been misunderstood.

[Background Info. Rwanda, page 739:a]

b. USAID grants US \$2 million for genocide orphans, flood victims: The USAID assistant administrator for democracy, conflict and humanitarian assistance, Roger Winter, has announced an increase in planned aid to Rwanda by almost US \$2.8 million, the US aid agency reported.

He was speaking during a four-day visit to Rwanda, which ended, May 28.

The increase includes \$2 million to enable 6,000 genocide orphans to continue their education for two years. It will also include \$350,000 for dairy projects, \$363,000 for a programme to mitigate sexual gender-based violence, and \$50,000 in disaster relief to offset the effects of recent floods in the country.

Heavy rains from April to early May caused some 63 deaths and left hundreds of people homeless in Rwanda. In a report, FEWS NET—the USAID-funded Famine Early Warning System—identified the most affected prefectures as Cyangugu, Kibuye, Byumba, Kigali Rurale and Kigali Ville.

The rains damaged homes and infrastructure across the country, FEWS reported at the time, but added that food security remained good at the national level.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SENEGAL

a. Senegal humbles France: Senegal pulled off one of the biggest upsets in the World Cup history, May 31, stunning defending champion France 1-0 in the opening football match in Seoul.

Senegal—written off as 300-1 World Cup outsiders—lined up with a seemingly defensive 5-4-1 formation suffocating the midfield, tempting France to press too hard. Whenever they did so, the pace of El Hadji Diouf, Senegal's star forward, constantly troubled their central defensive pairing of Franck Leboeuf and Marcel Desailly.

He gave them due warning on five minutes, shooting down the wing and squaring for Khalilou Fadiga, whose loose effort from the edge of box was easily smothered by Fabien Barthez. But on the half-hour nobody could catch him.

Fed by Fadiga, he swept past Leboeuf, dumping the former Chelsea player unceremoniously on his backside, and crossed low into the box.

Emmanuel Petit, attempting to clear, could only knock the ball into Barthez, who inadvertently blocked it back into the six-yard box where Pape Bouba Diop slotted home from a sitting position.

Immediately he raced to the corner flag, taking off his shirt and throwing it on the turf, where the Senegal players funk-danced joyously around it.

Immediately the standard for World Cup goal celebrations had been set, just as Roger Milla's celebrations became the trade mark of Italia 90 after his team Cameroon beat Argentina.

The French, who badly missed the guile of injured play maker Zinedine Zidane, will remind everyone of their chances. David Trezeguet hit the post. Thierry Henry hit the bar. And Patrick Vieira went close with a header. But, truth be told, they never really did enough to equalize.

They pressed all right, but the we-just-have-to-turn-up-to-win swagger only left them when it was too late. Senegal were worth their victory.

(SOURCE: *Hindustan Times*, New Delhi)

SIERRA LEONE

a. 1,000-carat gem smuggled out: Sierra Leone's government suspects a huge diamond has been smuggled out of the country to Belgium and on to Israel, the state buying office said, May 20.

The head of the government Gold and Diamond Office said the information came to light in the hunt for a 1,000 carat gem, rumoured to have been discovered in April in what would be the second-biggest diamond find ever.

"Government has... got information that an Israeli-based company took a diamond into Belgium with the caratage ranging from 443 carats and above," Lawrence Myers said. "The government is alleging that the company has passed the diamond through Antwerp and on to Israel". The name of the company was not immediately available. Sierra Leone has been a rich source of diamonds for decades and rebels sold so-called "blood diamonds" to fund a brutal 10-year civil war which officially ended in January, allowing elections to be held recently.

A UN-backed certification scheme was set up in 2000 to stop the flow of illegal gems. Myers said the government intended to contact the United Nations over the latest diamond. Legal exports have boomed since certification was put in place, but officials acknowledge many diamonds are still smuggled out. Most of Sierra Leone's stones are exported to Antwerp, the biggest market for uncut stones.

A 110 carat diamond found in the east of Sierra Leone and worth more than a million dollars was exported to Europe recently through official channels.

(SOURCE: *Asian Age*, New Delhi and *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Sierra Leone, page 476:a]

SOMALIA

a. Over 60 killed in latest Mogadishu fighting: At least 60 people have died in the latest fighting in Mogadishu, with hundreds wounded, local sources said, May 28.

The bloodiest fighting in Somalia in the last few years erupted, May 28, after the militia, reportedly loyal to Mogadishu faction leader Muse Sudi Yalahow, clashed with forces of the Transitional National Government (TNG) in north Mogadishu, "in the same general area where clashes between the two sides occurred, May 24", Muhammad Tahlil, a north Mogadishu resident said.

b. Privately-owned radio and TV station shut down: Reporters Without Borders protested, May 27, against the shutting down of the privately-owned Somali Broadcasting Corporation (SBC) by the authorities of the Somali region of Puntland and called for the measure to be reversed at once.

"This is a serious blow to media diversity in the region and is not the first time press freedom has been threatened in Puntland, where three journalists were arrested last year," said Reporters Without Borders secretary-general Robert Minard in a letter to Puntland President Col. Abdullahi Yusuf.

He called on him to see that journalists could work freely and safely in the region.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SOUTH AFRICA

a. Cronje killed in plane crash: The former South African cricket captain, Hansie Cronje, banned from the sport after a matchfixing scandal, was killed, June 1, when the cargo plane he was traveling in crashed into a mountain range.

He was 32. The plane, carrying three persons, crashed outside the city of George, 500 km east of Cape Town. South African sport ministry officials told the South African Press Association (SAPA) that Cronje was killed in the crash.

"We have heard the news, we are still trying to recover. It's a shock," said Graham Abrahams, sports ministry spokesman. Rescue workers were dropped off by helicopter and propelled down a crag in the mountain to reach the crash victims on the ground.

Doctors at the scene confirmed that all three persons on board the plane were killed, SAPA reported. Cronje's relatives said the plane left Bloemfontein, 400 km south of Johannesburg, for George, June 1, but was unable to land due to bad weather conditions and crashed at about 0500 GMT.

It appears that while the pilot tried to circle before attempting a landing he crashed into the rugged Outeniqua mountains.

Cronje was banned for life from the game by the United Cricket Board of South Africa in 2000. The decision was later endorsed by the game's governing body, the International Cricket Council, after he admitted to having taken money to fix matches involving South Africa.

Indian officials said they had tape recordings of him talking with the Indian bookmaker during the team's tour of the subcontinent.

Several teammates later told a government commission that Cronje conveyed to them an offer in 1996 of up to \$ 350,000 to lose a one day game against India.

Cronje denied that, but admitted receiving \$ 100,000 from gamblers in exchange for match information and conveying other offers from gamblers to teammates to perform badly.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg and *Hindu*, Madras)

SWAZILAND

a. HIV/AIDS campaign to be led from the grassroots: Swaziland's mayors are adopting a novel method in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

They are reversing the usual top-down approach and are being led instead by their constituents, ordinary Swazis, it was reported, May 27.

"The voice of the people will determine how we will combat AIDS in the towns," explained chairman of the Ezulwini town board, Nokuthula Mthembu.

The first woman to hold the top government post in her municipality, Mthembu is chairperson of the Executive Council of the Alliance of Mayors' Initiative for Community Action on AIDS at the Local Level (AMICAALL).

"There has never been a project like this one," Mthembu said. "But we absolutely must have an innovative approach to combat the deadly disease that is attacking our municipalities. We desperately need fresh ideas."

b. 150,000 need food aid: A joint report by the World Food Programme (WFP) and the UN Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) estimates that close to 150,000 people in Swaziland are in need of food assistance, it was reported, May 29.

Although the government has already allocated 1,500 mt of maize for distribution to the most vulnerable, it still falls short of the 188,000 mt needed over the next six months. Maize production is down by some 18 per cent and 37 per cent below the average of the last five years.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

TANZANIA

a. ADB funds for Dar-es-Salaam water project: The African Development Bank (ADB) has signed an agreement with the Tanzanian government to provide a loan of over US \$46.8 million and a grant of over \$1.6 million to finance a water supply and sanitation scheme for Dar-es-Salaam.

The five-year project, approved by the ADB board of directors in December, is intended to "help alleviate the critical problem of water shortage in Dar-es-Salaam by promoting private-sector participation", according to a press release from the bank, June 3.

The rehabilitation of the water supply and sanitation system was a poverty reduction measure intended to "improve the economic and social wellbeing of the people... by providing them with better access to clean water, thereby reducing the incidence of waterborne diseases among vulnerable groups", it added.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

ZAMBIA

a. President appeals for food aid: Zambian President Levy Mwanawasa has become the latest southern African leader to declare the regional food shortage a national disaster.

In a nationwide television and radio address, Mwanawasa appealed for urgent international aid to assist the 4 million Zambians threatened with starvation and said this year's ravaged corn crop would run out by August.

Most southern African nations are also in desperate trouble.

About 10 million people in Malawi, Zimbabwe, Lesotho and Swaziland are on the brink of starvation, according to the World Food Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organisation, two UN agencies working together to combat the crisis.

Estimates of those needing help in Zambia and Mozambique—both badly affected by the crisis—were not yet available.

Though crops were harvested in April and May, the food agencies worry that food could start running out in the next few weeks.

"It could turn (into a famine) if adequate measures are not taken immediately," said Liliana Babli, the FAO official responsible for Southern Africa.

"The numbers of people requiring assistance are enormous".

The region need 1.2 million tons of emergency food aid and about 4 million tons to make it through the year, according to the UN agencies.

Aid officials were also worried the food shortages would worsen the impact of HIV, which infects an estimated 5 million people in the region's countries. "It's just really an explosive situation, when you have those two things combined," said Brenda Barton, a WFP spokeswoman. "In a food crisis, the

people that die the first are the weak. The weak in southern Africa are people with HIV/AIDS".

The hunger across the region has been blamed on two successive harvests ravaged by droughts, floods and the disastrous weather. But government corruption and mismanagement has exacerbated the problem, aid officials say. In Malawi, which declared a state of disaster in February, the government inexplicably sold off its 167,000 ton emergency grain reserve in 2001—just before the crisis started.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, Madras and *Times of Zambia*, Lusaka)

ZIMBABWE

a. Editor wins prize: The editor of Zimbabwe's beleaguered independent daily newspaper won the World Association of Newspapers annual press freedom prize, May 27.

Geoff Nyarota was awarded the Golden Pen of Freedom in recognition for his "outstanding service to the cause of press freedom in the face of constant persecution," the association said.

Nyarota and his newspaper, *The Daily News*, have borne the brunt of a harsh crackdown on the independent media by the government of the President, Robert Mugabe. Since the newspaper started in 1999, it had its printing plant destroyed in a mysterious explosion involving land mines that was never solved. Many of its reporters were beaten by ruling party militants and arrested by police.

Nyarota himself was charged recently with publishing false information, the 10th independent journalist arrested under harsh new media laws designed to quash criticism of the government.

"I receive this award on behalf of the beleaguered and much terrorised journalists of Zimbabwe", Nyarota said.

(SOURCE: *Statesman*, Calcutta)

[Background Info. Zimbabwe, page 742:a]

ANALYSIS-I

Hunger stalks Africa

On most days, Melina Jakasoni's three small children survive on a single meal of boiled and mashed pumpkin leaves.

When her scrounging pays off, the young mother is able to make porridge from donated corn husks. On rare occasions, a neighbour allows her to forage in her yard for groundnuts. Once again, hunger is stalking Africa. The calamity here is one piece

of a food crisis—partly natural and partly man-made—that is sweeping southern Africa. It is biting in every household of the dusty settlement of Kaundyuma about 18 miles from Lilongwe, Malawi's capital.

"This year has been very terrible for me," said Jakasoni as her scrawny 3-year-old son, Vita, sucked in frustration on her shriveled breasts. "I have even been forced to eat wild roots".

Medical workers say that, since January, 13 of Kaunduma's 474 residents have died of hunger. Jakasoni's mother was among them. Her two youngest children are in need of therapeutic feeding. Her oldest child, a 7-year-old, is so gaunt that she could pass for much younger.

"This year, I think many more people will die," said Kenius Mkanda, a local health worker.

Malawi, a densely populated country slightly smaller than Pennsylvania, is facing its worst hunger crisis in more than 50 years. About 70 per cent of its 11 million people are in desperate need of food aid, according to government estimates. And that figure is expected to rise.

Hundreds of adults and children have died of hunger-related illnesses since December 2001, aid workers said.

Severe flooding in some parts of the country, coupled with drought in others, has slashed crop yields in the last several years.

Although April's harvest of corn has brought temporary relief, the yield was small. Experts and government officials predict that most families' food stocks will run out by August.

"It's unthinkable what might happen if food is not available by the time it is needed," said Chigomezgo Mtegha, an assistant programme officer for the UN World Food Programme in Malawi.

The agency is preparing to launch an emergency operation to get food to about 2 million people by September.

"Right now, people are eating from their (unripe) gardens in many parts of the country," said Lucius Chikuni, Malawi's commissioner for disaster preparedness, relief and rehabilitation. "They have sold their assets. They are completely overstretched when it comes to coping mechanisms".

As bad as things are here, Malawi is only one part of a larger problem. In neighbouring Zimbabwe, which is suffering from both drought and the effects of President Robert Mugabe's land-redistribution policies, about 3 million people will be in need of daily food aid.

Drought and floods have caused food shortages for more than 12 million of Zambia's 10 million people.

Lesotho's prime minister recently declared that the country was starving, while in Swaziland, the government says more than 150,000 of its 1 million citizens are facing severe hunger.

The scourge of AIDS is compounding the food crisis. An estimated 15 per cent to 20 per cent of the adult population in southern Africa is HIV-positive.

Riddled with disease, many of them are unable to find jobs or till their fields.

Older Malawians say they have not seen such hunger since 1949, widely considered the year of the country's worst famine. And even those days seem less catastrophic than today.

"In 1949, we had somewhere to buy food, and we got handouts from the government," recalled Shoes Namitambo, chief of Nthumba village in the southern part of the country, one of the hardest-hit regions.

"This year the problem is, there is nothing to buy and if there is, we can't afford it".

The official price of corn has increased nearly 400 per cent to about \$7 for a 110-pound bag, a fortune in a country where 60 per cent of people survive on \$1 a day. Nthumba, a community of 74 households, has lost three people to hunger since November.

Another three fell prey to crocodiles as they tried to pluck water lily roots, a poor substitute for green vegetables, from the nearby Shire River. But the biggest tragedy, aid workers, diplomats and donors say, is that the situation never should have become this bad.

In addition to climatic factors, donors say the crisis is the consequence of bad management of Malawi's grain reserves, logistics problems with importing corn, and the vicious circle of poverty that leaves people too poor to buy food, seeds and fertilizer.

In 2000, Malawi was ranked 163rd out of 174 countries on a UN list rating countries on prosperity and development.

In despair, many families have resorted to selling off their meagre belongings. Many slash their asking prices just to make a sale. A goat, for example, used to sell for about \$7. Hungry people, who don't own freezers to store meat, are now willing to sell their livestock for as little as \$1.50.

Instead of buying corn by the bag, most people can only afford to buy a mug full, costing about 3 cents, at a time, said Namitambo, the village chief.

Desperation has also led to stealing, and vigilantism is on the rise. Two people in Kaunduma have been killed since January because they stole crops, said Mkanda, the health care specialists.

In the pediatric ward at Lilongwe's Central Hospital, mothers clutch and pray over infants who display the classic traits of malnutrition: swollen stomachs, withered limbs, bulging, listless eyes, and wispy, yellowing hair.

Some will bear the physical scars of undernourishment for the rest of their lives. Many will not live to see next year's harvest.

—Ann M Simmons in *Los Angeles Times* reproduced in *Deccan Herald*, Bangalore, June 2002)

ANALYSIS-II

Liberia's future imperilled

It is not clear that President Charles Taylor's ouster would improve Liberia's woeful state.

The rebel force now fighting Taylor Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy, is described by regional intelligence officials as a motley assortment of some of the worst elements who fought in Liberia's civil war, both for and against Taylor.

The rebels have offered no programme for governance, no ideology and no political vision beyond getting rid of Taylor.

Military sources in the region describe the rebel force as lacking command-and-control structures. They say it is undisciplined and that it is as likely to prey on the civilian population as Taylor's notorious government forces.

The President of Guinea, Gen Lansana Conte, has made little effort to hide his military's support for the rebels, despite widespread reports of their human rights abuses.

Despite some congressional misgivings about Guinea's support for the rebels, the Guinean military will receive \$3 million in US military aid for training and communications equipment in 2002.

With the RUF disarmed in Sierra Leone and international attention focused on cutting off the flow of diamonds through Taylor's network, Taylor has turned increasingly to timber to fund his regime.

Sources with direct knowledge of Taylor's arms shipments, whose information was confirmed by intelligence sources in West Africa, said most weapons were coming to Liberia by sea, primarily in logging ships.

While logging companies have long operated in Liberia, Taylor's deal with Oriental Timber Co (OTC) was the first time the Sapo park was opened up for exploitation, endangering the fragile ecosystem that is home to thousands of unique species of plants and animals.

OTC, which has come under criticism by environmental groups, already owned Liberia's largest timber concession outside the protected area.

The company has been identified in a series of UN reports compiled since December 2000 as a key provider of weapons to Taylor's government. US and European intelligence officials and sources with direct knowledge of events concur with those findings.

A study released in May by Global Witness, a nonprofit organization in London that investigates connections between the exploitation of natural resources and human rights abuses, found "direct links between Liberia's timber industry and the network of illegal arms transfers, private militias and human rights abuses that threaten international peace and security in western Africa".

OTC's manager in Liberia, Gus Kouwenhoven, did not respond to numerous e-mails and faxes seeking comment. In a faxed statement delivered in 2001, Kouwenhoven, a Dutch national, strongly denied any OTC or personal involvement in the arms trade.

Kouwenhoven, who is under the UN travel ban for his alleged role in the weapons trade, said that OTC operates "in strict conformity with the terms and conditions of our timber concession agreement with the government" and that the company has never paid any funds directly or personally to President Taylor.

In May the UN gave Liberia six months to draw up "transparent and internationally verifiable audit regimes" to ensure revenue derived from the timber industry was "used for legitimate social, humanitarian and development purposes".

US and British officials said the new requirement was a half step at best but would allow stronger action against the timber industry in the future.

—Washington Post / Deccan Herald, Bangalore

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ANGOLA

a. Thousands left to starve: Thousands of Angolans have died, and hundreds of thousands more face starvation from a catastrophic man-made nutritional crisis, says a report, June 12.

Unless the Angolan government and the United Nations drastically increase their efforts to meet the needs of the civilian population of the country, the situation would worsen, said Midecins Sans Frontières (MSF) at a press conference in Luanda.

Since an April 4 ceasefire agreement, MSF has gained access to populations cut off from humanitarian assistance for over three years. It found levels of severe malnutrition and mortality far exceeding emergency thresholds.

The Angolan government and the United Nations, particularly the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), have been unacceptably slow to respond to the urgent humanitarian needs of at least half a million Angolans, according to MSF.

b. UNITA demobilisation problem: The number of rebel UNITA soldiers and their families entering quartering areas to begin the demobilisation process has caught the government and aid agencies by surprise.

It is estimated that three million people require immediate humanitarian assistance in Angola, it was reported, June 12.

Of particular concern was that the number of troops in the quartering areas had reached over 79,000 and the number of family members with them had reached 230,000.

This was in the nearly two months since the signing of the ceasefire agreement on April 4 and was far more than expected, said the UN Office in Angola (UNOA).

As the humanitarian crisis in Angola unfolds, the United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, has sent his Special Advisor on Africa, Ibrahim Gambari, to assess what more the UN could do to assist. Also with Gambari is Ross Mountain, deputy humanitarian and emergency relief coordinator.

"The mission's findings will be incorporated into the Secretary-General's report to the Security Council, including recommendations on how to adjust the mandate of the UN operation in Angola and how to restructure the overall UN presence in the country," a UN statement said.

(SOURCE: *Times of Zambia*, Lusaka)

[Background Info: Angola, page 745:a]

BURKINA FASO

a. German funding for agriculture, health: The German government has agreed to provide funding to the tune of 18.450 billion CFA (about US \$26.6 million) for "vital" development projects in agriculture, health, water and sanitation in Burkina Faso.

This was announced, June 4, by Burkina Faso's finance ministry. The funding is a result of negotiations launched in 2001 between the two governments. It will be used, among other things, to build and improve rural roads, and to boost HIV/AIDS protection by increasing the distribution of condoms.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BURUNDI

a. Anti-genocide leader released from prison: The leader of a Tutsi anti-genocide organisation, Diomede Rutamucero, was released, June 11, from Mpimba Central Prison in Bujumbura, after being held for 40 days without charge.

Net Press quoted him as saying he could not understand how "they can continue to unjustly, illegally and arbitrarily imprison, exclude and marginalise those who are at risk of genocide".

Rutamucero, who is the president of Puissance d'Autodéfense-Amasekanya, was arrested, May 2, after members of his organisation staged a protest in Bujumbura against the Arusha peace accord and the adoption of laws on provisional immunity for returning political leaders, many of whom they hold responsible for massacres of Tutsis.

[Background Info. Burundi, page 748:a]

b. Thousands of panic-stricken Bujumbura residents return: Thousands of panic-stricken residents who fled from northern Bujumbura, June 4, during fighting between the army and anti-government forces have returned to their homes, the army spokesman, Col Augustin Nzampemba, said.

"We convinced them that there was no need to panic," he said.

He said a group of rebel Front National de Libération (FNL) fighters had exchanged fire with the army in the capital's northern suburbs of Kinama and Kamenge, prompting panic-stricken residents to flee.

The clash occurred when the rebels attacked two army positions some 15 km north of the city centre. Nzampemba said six civilians were wounded, two of them seriously, when rebel rockets landed in the suburb of Buyenzi, but "now the situation is calm".

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

CAMEROON

a. Amnesty International, Survival protest Mbororo arrests: Two global human rights watchdogs, Amnesty International (AI) and Survival have protested the arrest of four activists of the Mbororo ethnic group in Cameroon's north-west province, and launched a campaign for their release.

AI said, June 13, that it was concerned over the safety of the detained activists who had been held without charge and faced further risk of torture or ill-treatment.

The military, Survival added, arrested Ousman Haman, Ahmadou Hassan, Adamu Isa and Yunusa Mbagoji in April and May on the orders of a member of the ruling Cameroon Peoples' Democratic Movement.

Ousman Haman was arrested near Sabga in Mezam judicial division. Under the law he could only be charged within Mezam, where English Common Law is in force. Instead he was taken to Bafoussam in another province to be tried by a military tribunal under French-based Cameroonian law.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Cameroon, page 340:a]

CAPE VERDE ISLANDS

a. Thousands face food shortages: Thousands of people in Cape Verde have been hit by food shortages due in part to poor harvests, according to UN agencies which have begun channelling aid to the affected populations, it was reported, June 7.

The World Food Programme (WFP) has approved an immediate emergency response operation to the tune of US \$199,000 to provide 556 mt of maize to some 30,000 people, WFP country director Sonsoles Ruedas, said June 6, from the Cape Verdean capital, Praia.

Ruedas said WFP was preparing a bigger operation worth some US \$1.2 million. The targeted beneficiaries of WFP's assistance are vulnerable groups such as the elderly, the handicapped and female heads of households, she said.

Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) country director Arlindo Braganca Gomes said his organisation was providing seeds - 60 mt of maize, 52 mt of beans - and small farming tools to some 14,000 families [over 80,000 people], under a US \$229,000 agreement signed recently with the Cape Verdean government. The project covers 13 of the country's 17 districts.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

COMORO ISLANDS

a. Army remains at key buildings amid power struggle: The military continued to surround key government buildings on the island of Grande Comore, June 17, as a power struggle for control of key ministries continued.

Kalula Kalambay, UN Development Programme spokesman in the capital Moroni said: "It is not a coup. They have a problem with the new political structure."

Under a new political system, the islands of Moheli, Anjouan and Grand Comore now have their own federal presidents. An overall Union President is also based on Grande Comore.

The military activity started after newly elected Grand Comore President Abdou Soule Elbak and Union President Azali Assoumani couldn't agree on how they would share rule of the island.

Uncertainty over troop movements in Moroni: Uncertainty surrounded sudden troop movements around public buildings in Moroni, capital of the Comoro islands, June 14.

The main public buildings, including finance and education ministries, were surrounded and soldiers were posted at the customs headquarters and at Moroni's port.

The security has also been stepped up around the national radio building and government workers have been asked to leave their offices. Around the port area, dock workers had gathered to protest. Otherwise the islands were calm.

Two weeks ago newly elected President Azali Assoumani formed a new government for the Union of Comoros as part of a devolution process.

On June 13, the regional President of Grande Comoros island, Abdou Soule Elbak, replaced key people in government who appeared to be loyal to Assoumani.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Comoro Islands, page 734:a]

CONGO

a. 10,000 flee fighting in Brazzaville: At least 10,000 people have fled Brazzaville, capital of the Republic of Congo, following two days of fighting between government forces and Ninja militias that began, June 14, the United Nations Humanitarian Coordination Office in the country reported.

On June 14, it said, Brazzaville endured two sustained military attacks in the northeastern outskirts of the town. The first was against the military based near the international airport at Maya Maya, and the second targeted a police school and a station of the gendarmerie in the neighbourhood of Moukondo.

Hundreds of rounds of rockets, mortars, and heavy-calibre machine-gun fire were directed on both areas, the UN reported. The Ninja tried repeatedly, in vain, to destroy the government military helicopters at the airport.

On June 15, the sound of artillery fire, rockets and mortars reverberated around the hills surrounding Brazzaville as government forces attempted to "widen the safety zone" around the capital, Bill Paton, the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Brazzaville, said. At least 10 attackers and three civilians were confirmed dead, he said.

b. 55 of 137 National Assembly seats decided in first round: Interior minister Pierre Oba announced, June 4, that 55 of 137 available National Assembly seats had been determined in the first round of legislative elections in the Republic of Congo.

President Denis Sassou-Nguesso's Parti Congolais du Travail (the Congolese Labour Party) won 29 of the 55 seats, in an election the government said was marred by foul play and violence. Fresh polls are being conducted in districts where voting was disrupted. Those include several in the Pool region where government forces are fighting "Ninja" militias allied to the Rev Frederic Bitsangou, alias Pasteur Ntouni.

Former Prime Minister Andre Milongo won 59.65 per cent of the vote in the Boko District of Pool. Milongo, who had been regarded as the only real threat to Sassou-Nguesso in the March 10 presidential election, withdrew his candidacy for the presidency two days prior to the polls, claiming irregularities.

[Background Info. Congo, page 746:a]

c. Some 20,000 remain inaccessible to aid, says UN: UN agencies in the Republic of Congo (ROC) say that at least 20,000 people in urgent need of humanitarian aid remain in inaccessible areas of the troubled Pool region.

"At present, the UN has access to the towns of Djamballa, Kinkala, Madzia, Kibouende, the east part of the railway line (on the south side only), Kindamba and Bouenza region (west of Pool region)," the office of the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator reported, June 11.

"However, the UN still does not have access to many areas of great concern in the Pool region including Mayama, Vinza, Kimba, and the west part of the railway line, such as Mindouli (between Matoumbou and Loutete)," it added. The UN said it remained in contact with government officials on a daily basis to coordinate access to the most affected zones in Pool, dependent on government assessments of the security situation in a given area.

d. Direct telephone link between Kinshasa and Brazzaville: A direct telephone line was reinstalled, June 5, between the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and neighbouring Republic of Congo (ROC) after a 15-year hiatus, the director of the National Telecommunications and Post Office, Rene-Serge Blanchard Oba, said in the ROC capital, Brazzaville.

Aged equipment, too expensive to replace, had prevented direct phone links between the neighbours.

"President Denis Sassou-Nguesso, having restored relations with his DRC counterpart, Joseph Kabila, wanted the telephone line re-established so that the people of both countries could communicate with ease and reconcile their differences," Oba said. The two countries signed a telecommunications agreement, March 27, 2002.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

CONGO (DR)

a. DRC takes Rwanda to International Court of Justice: The International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague, began hearings, June 13, a case the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) government brought against Rwanda.

The DRC has accused Rwanda of committing "genocide against more than 3.5 million people" on Congolese territory, and has demanded the "immediate, unconditional withdrawal" of Rwandan troops. The application submitted to the court stated that Rwanda had been guilty of "armed aggression" in the DRC since August 1998, and that it had resulted in "large-scale human slaughter" in the east of the country, including the victims of the recent "massacres" in Kisangani.

The DRC has accused Rwandan troops and their Congolese rebel allies, the Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie (RCD), of rape and sexual assault, assassinating and kidnapping political figures and human rights activists, systematic looting of public and private institutions, seizure of property belonging to civilians, and arrests and arbitrary detentions.

b. European Parliament condemns massacre: The 626-member European Parliament adopted a tough resolution condemning the recent massacre of civilians in Kisangani.

The massacre of almost 200 people in Kisangani in May 2002 was one of the bloodiest episodes of the war of aggression and occupation being waged in the east of the DRC.

Following a request by Parliament's largest political group - the 233-strong EPP-ED Group - Euro-MPs held an emergency debate on one of the worst atrocities in the continuing Civil War that is tearing apart the DRC. EPP-ED Group Euro-MP Johan Van Hecke from Belgium tabled a tough Resolution with support from other Political Groups. The three-and-a-half year conflict in the DRC has dramatically increased the rates of malnutrition and mortality in the DRC, with 70% of the people living in the war-affected areas having no access to health care or adequate food supplies, and has claimed millions of lives.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

EGYPT

a. Bush rejects Mubarak's West Asia peace plan: Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak at the weekend presented a peace plan to United States President George W Bush for the creation of a Palestinian state in 2003, but the U.S. President has rejected same, it was reported, June 10.

The two men met at Camp David, outside Washington. The BBC's Washington correspondent Jon Leyne said Mubarak was given the honour of a meeting at the presidential retreat as one of America's key Arab allies.

Violence will never stop unless there is political negotiation to give hope to the people on both sides that peace is coming.

Speaking ahead of the meeting, Bush said he planned to issue a statement on the peace process after talking to both Mubarak and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, who is due in Washington, June 10.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, Madras)

ETHIOPIA

a. 2 hijackers shot dead aboard Ethiopian plane: Two youths who tried to hijack an internal Ethiopian Airlines flight were shot dead by national security agents on board, it was reported, June 10.

One of the plane's two stewards was slightly injured during the attempted hijacking.

The hijackers, aged 20 and 22, tried to seize a plane that had taken off from Bahir Dar in the northeast for Addis Ababa with 42 passengers on board. It finally completed its flight as scheduled.

The youths, identified as Tesfaouni Yeneabat, 22, and Tewodros Mekonen, 20, both from Bahir Dar, tried to seize the Foker 50 half an hour into the flight and were shot dead by national security agents.

The pair, sitting in the centre of the aircraft, got up together after half an hour, and one headed for the pilots' cabin while the other moved towards the rear of the plane, shouting that they were hijacking it. They clashed with the stewards on the way.

National television showed the bodies on its evening newscast. Passengers interviewed by state radio after the plane landed in Addis Ababa praised the response of the security agents.

"They wanted to take the lives of a lot of people. The agents' action was justified," said Ruth Berhanu, an Ethiopian resident in the United States who had just spent six weeks in Bahir Dar.

b. Wildlife on verge of extinction: Four mammal and two bird species native to Ethiopia are facing extinction, according to the Ethiopian Institute of Biodiversity Conservation and Research.

The causes are extermination by humans and the destruction of their habitat, it was reported, June 9.

The endangered mammals are the Walia Ibex, the Ethiopian (red) Wolf, the Mountain Nyala and the Creasy Zebra (or Abyssinian Wild Ass). The birds are the White-Winged Fluff Tail and the Ankober Serin.

The first three mammals are found in the Semien National Park in the northern and south-eastern parts.

The Creasy Zebra lives in the Awash Game Reserve in the east-central Ethiopia. Northern Ethiopia and the central highlands

are home to the White-Wigged Fluff Tail and Ankober Serin bird species. There are only 514 Walia Ibex remaining, fewer than 2,000 Mountain Nyala and 800 Abyssinian Wild Ass.

Other mammals and birds are also facing threats of extinction. Studies had showed the causes include deterioration of the natural habitat because of destruction, hunting by humans, improper management of land and lack of awareness.

(SOURCE: *Statesman*, Calcutta)

GUINEA

a. Opposition leaders jailed for 20 years: Some 68 opposition leaders in Equatorial Guinea have been sentenced to jail terms ranging from six to 20 years for allegedly plotting to overthrow President Teodoro Obiang Nguema, it was reported, June 10.

They include Felipe Ondo, head of the Democratic Republican Force and Severo Moto of the Progress Party. Each received 20 year jail terms. Placibo Mico Abogo of the Party for Democratic and Social Convergence, received 14 years along with 15 other defendants.

Another 76 accused were freed in the June 9 trial. They were part of at least 140 opposition politicians detained following the 1997 reported coup attempt. At the start of the trial on May 23, in the capital Malabo, prosecution had asked for the death sentence. The European Union in Madrid, Spain, expressed concern, June 10, "about procedural irregularities during the trial, allegations of torture and physical abuse of the accused, and the weakness of elements of evidence that contrasts with the severity of the sentences".

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

GUINEA BISSAU

a. Coup plotters to be pardoned: Guinea-Bissau's President Kumba Yala has proposed an amnesty for soldiers who were involved in reported coup attempts against his government, it was reported, June 12.

Yala, who said such an amnesty would promote national reconciliation, had requested parliament to pass a law to allow for the amnesty. He was quoted as saying the amnesty was "motivated by a desire to calm souls".

Addressing representatives of the international community and leaders of Guinea's ethnic groups in the capital, Bissau, June 11, Yala said alleged coup plotters could now return home without fear, adding "they are also sons of Guinea-Bissau, despite the mistake they made," Lusa news service reported.

Diplomats, including a United Nations secretary-general's envoy, David Stephen, were played a tape recording of an alleged confession from a ring leader of plotters who reportedly wanted to seize government on May 20.

[Background Info. Guinea, Bissau, page 742:a]

b. Malabo, Niamey urged to fight rights abuses: The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended, June 7, that Guinea-Bissau and Niger strengthen efforts to combat female genital mutilation (FGM) and all other abuses against children, UNHCHR reported, June 12.

At the conclusion of its 13th session in Geneva, UNHCHR welcomed the prohibition of corporal punishment in Guinea-Bissau, and the establishment of the National Committee for the Survival, Protection and Development of Children in Niger.

However, the UN committee said Guinea-Bissau did not have a comprehensive children's rights policy, lacked an up-to-date national plan of action for the implementation of the UN children's convention and had a low budget allocation for health and education.

Regular occurrence of sexual abuse of children within the context of the family, including the extended family, high rates of infant mortality and malnutrition, and FGM were also widespread problems in Guinea-Bissau, it added.

c. Diplomatic training seminar ends: A three week long intensive training on diplomatic practices organised by UNITAR ended, June 7, at the Palm Beach Hotel.

The training session which exposed participants to different teachings on diplomatic practices drew participants from The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau and Nigeria.

Speaking at the closing session of the seminar, Harada of UNITAR congratulated the participants on their successes and expressed UNITAR's continued cooperation and its intention to work with them in the second phase of the training come September.

The UNDP resident coordinator, John Kakonge said the enthusiasm manifested from the beginning of the training programme ensured its successful end. He urged the participants to put into practice what they have learnt "so that they can improve and carry out their duties in state functions".

He said the additional knowledge they had acquired and the diplomatic training need to be backed up by practice to ensure the impact of the knowledge gained.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

KENYA

a. Bomb victims sue Osama for \$100b seized assets: Nearly 100 Kenyans and Tanzanians have joined a \$100 billion lawsuit against Osama Bin Laden, the government of Sudan and several other parties accused of involvement in the 1998 US embassy bombings in Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam, it was reported, June 17.

A group of 96 Africans and six Americans, most of whom were employed by the two US embassies at the time of the

attacks, are hoping to be awarded a share of the funds linked to Bin Laden that the United States government has seized in the past four years.

About \$100 million in seized assets may be available, according to American attorney John Eaves who filed the suit in a federal court in Washington recently.

Eaves said he is seeking damages 1,000 times more than the \$100 million sum to stake a claim to any funds from further US seizures or treaty obligations on the part of nations named in the suit.

[Background Info. Kenya, page 607:e]

b. 32 sacked in KCSE scandal: The Government has interdicted 32 supervisors and invigilators in Nyanza Province over irregularities in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examination, it was reported, June 6.

Provincial deputy director of education, Samuel Oyier, said some of those interdicted have received their letters from the ministry.

He said the government was still carrying out investigations and warned that some of the supervisors and invigilators may face disciplinary action.

Oyier said 32 heads where examination irregularities were reported will face disciplinary action.

c. 16 illegal immigrants arrested: Police, June 5, arrested 16 illegal Somali immigrants in Meru north district as they sneaked through the area.

Local police chief, Charles Ngere, said the arrested aliens included two Kenyan-Somalis from Wajir and Garissa districts who are believed to have been guiding the foreigners.

The aliens, Ngere said, entered the country without valid documents adding that they will be arraigned in a Maua court on charges of entering in the country illegally.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Kenya, page 748:a]

LIBERIA

a. Taylor says he can't be defeated: President Charles Taylor has reiterated that his government will neither be defeated militarily nor politically, despite the apparent international isolation of the country.

He made these assertions at the weekend during a "confidence-building" trip to the central provincial town of Gbarnga along with scores of his officials family, immediate relatives and partisans of the ruling National Patriotic Party (NPP), it was reported, June 17.

The visit comes weeks after government troops recaptured the town from rebels of the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) following weeks of bloody battles.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Liberia, page 749:a]

LIBYA

a. Lockerbie families say no to offer: Some families of the victims of the 1988 Lockerbie plane bomb want their lawyers to reject a \$2.7 billion compensation offer from Libya that is conditional on sanctions being lifted, family members said, June 7.

Daniel Cohen, whose wife has also expressed outrage at the offer for the loss of their daughter Theodora, 20, said a "general unhappiness with the way the announced settlement has been structured" emerged at talks with a US diplomat.

"We have expressed that in various ways and everybody has pledged to go back to their lawyers and say 'Fix it. There are lot of problems with this'," Cohen said, adding that 20 to 25 of the 270 bereaved families attended the talks.

Five of the family agreed with Cohen's views. "We're not the bad guys. There are no deals to be made here. This is about how they must comply and they must follow the UN resolutions," Ms Kathleen Flynn, whose 21-year-old son died in the bombing, said.

Mandela visits PanAm bomber: Former South African President Nelson Mandela, hinted that he might take up with the UK and US governments the possibility of the Lockerbie "bomber" Abdelbasset Ali Muhammed-al Megrahi, now serving a life sentence in Glasgow, being moved to a Muslim country.

Mandela, who visited him in the Barlinnie jail, said later that Megrahi was in virtual isolation and harassed by fellow prisoners. He expressed concern over the "psychological persecution" of Megrahi, a former Libyan intelligence agent convicted in 2001 of bombing a PanAm flight over Lockerbie, Scotland in 1988, killing 270 people.

His appeal against his conviction was rejected in March and he is likely to spend at least 20 years in jail. Mandela played a crucial role in persuading the Libyan leader, Muammar Gaddafi, to hand over two suspects for trial, and is said to feel some responsibility for Megrahi.

"Mandela has been closely involved in the case and he wants to see how the prisoner is doing and what the conditions in the prison are like," a spokesperson for him said ahead of his visit. Bob Monetti, president of the "Victims and PanAm Flight 103" dismissed speculation about a "hidden agenda" behind Mandela's visit. "Since he is partially responsible for him being in prison, perhaps he feels somewhat responsible and wants to make sure he is being treated well," he said. This followed a Labour MP's remarks that he believed Megrahi was innocent.

(SOURCE: *Asian Age*, New Delhi and *Hindu*, Madras)

[Background Info. Libya, page 749:a]

MALAGASY

a. Ravalomanana aims for unity government: President Marc Ravalomanana, June 17, sought to form a government of national unity in a bid to end the political crisis and win international acceptance.

But analysts said success could depend on whether his arch rival Didier Ratsiraka, who left for France, June 14, would accept the reappointment of hardline Prime Minister Jacques Sylla.

"I don't think Jacques Sylla is the kind of person that Ratsiraka had in mind to head a government of national reconciliation," a diplomatic source said. Ravalomanana dissolved his government, June 16, in favour of a national reconciliation administration, one of the main points of an Organisation of African Unity (OAU) peace plan thrashed out at the end of talks with former President Ratsiraka in Senegal.

African leaders plan to end Antananarivo crisis: The latest round of talks on Malagasy has ended without agreement in the Senegalese capital, Dakar, it was reported, June 11.

But African heads of state mediating between the two main political rivals, Marc Ravalomanana and Didier Ratsiraka, have drawn up a plan aimed at ending the political crisis on the island.

The document released at the end of the Dakar talks calls for legislative elections to be held before the end of the year and for a balanced transitional government. Ravalomanana and Ratsiraka were not on hand at the end of the talks to give their own opinions on what had been discussed. Instead, it was left to Senegal's foreign minister, Cheikh Tidiane Gadio, to present a plan aimed at finding a way out of the crisis.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info, Malagasy, page 750:a]

MALAWI

a. High court decision upholds Muluzi's ban on demonstrations: In an about-turn, a Malawian High Court, June 6, overturned a previous court ruling declaring unconstitutional a ban by President Bakili Muluzi on public protests over his third term in office.

The move is seen as a boost for Muluzi, who said, June 3, he would ignore the previous court ruling as it was "irresponsible and insensitive". Malawi's High Court, June 3, ruled that Muluzi could not ban demonstrations over a controversial campaign urging him to stand for a third term in office. The court ruling came after influential religious groups, including the Roman Catholic Church and the law society of Malawi, applied for an injunction against Muluzi's threat to stop demonstrations around the third term issue.

Judiciary and Muluzi clash over third term: Malawi's High Court, June 3, ruled that President Muluzi Bakili cannot ban demonstrations over a controversial campaign urging him to stand for a third term in office. Judge Dunstain Mwaungulu ruled that Muluzi's ban violated the constitutional rights of freedom of expression and assembly.

"If there was indeed the likelihood of violence between groups holding different opinions on the third term issue, as feared by the President, lawful demonstrations should be carried out peacefully and lawfully with adequate security from police," Mwaungulu said.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MALI

a. Former ruler returns as Bamako's elected leader: Ahmadou Toumani Toure, the former paratrooper officer who overthrew a dictator in Mali a decade ago, returned to power, June 8, after a landslide election victory.

Toure, 54, took office from President Alpha Oumar Konare, 66, who stepped down after serving the 10 years he was allowed by the constitution, a rule which has become a model of democracy in Africa. With the two men looking on the best of terms, the ceremony, June 8, was a reversal of the inauguration in 1992 at which Toure handed over to Konare as ruler of the landlocked former French colony.

"The vision of Mali's future that I would share with you is one of a country reconciled with itself, united and democratic, deeply rooted in its thousand-year-old culture," Toure said as he was sworn in before the nine judges of the Supreme Court.

New President takes office: Amadou Toumani Toure has been sworn in as the new President of Mali, during a ceremony in the capital Bamako, June 8, attended by 11 other Franco-phone African leaders. Making democratic history, Malians witnessed for the first time one constitutionally elected leader handing power to another duly elected president.

Toure, 53, known by his initials ATT, won the May presidential election, taking 65 per cent of the vote in the second-round runoff. He replaces the outgoing President, Alpha Oumar Konare, 66, who has served the maximum two five-year terms allowed by the constitution.

After ten years in office, Konare stepped down, June 8, handing back power to the former coup leader and soldier, ATT, who was interim head of state during a one-year democratic transition in Mali from 1991-1992.

As he took the oath of office and raised his right hand, ATT told an assembled audience of about 3,000, including nine Supreme Court judges, "I swear before God and the people of Mali to uphold the republican regime, to respect and ensure respect for the constitution and the law".

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

Background Info. Mali, page 750:a]

MAURITANIA

a. Police sued over reported torture: Two humanitarian organisations and a Mauritanian-born Frenchman, Mohamed Baba, have sued the police or allegedly torturing Baba.

The complaint was filed in a court in Clermont-Ferrand, France, the International Federation of Human Rights Leagues (FIDH) said, June 7.

Co-plaintiffs FIDH and the French Human Rights League said the suit was against the interior minister, various senior officials of the Mauritanian security services, and anyone else involved.

According to the FIDH, Baba was arrested on April 12 after arriving in Mauritania to "visit his family" and taken to the headquarters of the state security services in the capital, Nouakchott.

b. Funds needed desperately: Two months after the World Food Programme launched a US \$7.5-million food appeal for victims of drought and floods in Mauritania, the implementation of the relief operation is being delayed by lack of funding, it was reported, June 4.

"I am bit worried about the international mobilisation" of funds, WFP Country Director Philippe Guyon-Le Bouffy said in Mauritania's capital, Nouakchott.

Since April 3, when the appeal was launched, donations have been received only from Finland, which has given US \$200,000 and Italy, \$91,000 although, Guyon Le-Bouffy said, some new pledges have been made. These include a promise to fund the purchase of 235 mt of oil and a commitment from Ireland to contribute 640 mt of wheat.

The US \$7.5 million would be used to buy large quantities of salt, wheat, rice and cooking oil for some 250,000 Mauritani-ans who face serious food shortages as a result of a poor farming season and inclement weather earlier, which destroyed crops and livestock. The food aid would go mainly to residents of the southern region, bordering northern Senegal, which was also affected by the floods and drought.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MOZAMBIQUE

a. Vodacom wins licence to operate in Maputo: Cellular network company Vodacom has won a licence to operate in Mozambique, after outbidding three rival operators with its offer of \$15m, it was reported, June 11.

The contract comes just a month after Vodacom officially launched a new network in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). It is now active in SA, Lesotho, Tanzania and the DRC, and holds a licence in Zambia, although it is not yet investing in Zambia as the spectrum may be too full to operate effectively.

Vodacom deputy CEO Andrew Mthembu said, June 10, he was convinced the right economic conditions existed to let Vodacom Mozambique lift the group's bottom line in time.

"The vast majority of the population is very poor. However, there is a wealthy segment prepared to pay for cellular services in US dollars and large enough in size for our investment to be very worthwhile."

b. Half a million people need aid: About half a million Mozambicans are in need of food aid, a Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) and World Food Programme (WFP) joint assessment said, June 4.

The crop and food supply assessment mission visited Mozambique from April 21 to May 10, 2002 to evaluate the

current situation and determine needs in the wake of a regional food crisis. The FAO/WFP report said about 515,000 people in poor households in 43 districts of the southern and central regions of Mozambique "are facing severe food insecurity due to drought-devastated agricultural production and exhaustion of their coping abilities over the last four years".

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

NAMIBIA

a. Fifth man arrested for cop's murder: A fifth suspect has been arrested and charged with the murder of police sergeant Andreas Johannes Nghatanga.

Nghatanga was killed during an armed robbery at a gambling house in Okuryangava, Windhoek, May 19.

The Police search for a sixth suspect is continuing. The Police last week identified him as Jason Nangobe (31), and asked the public to assist in tracking him down.

The fifth person to face charges of murder and robbery with aggravating circumstances is 25-year-old Elifas Ndalusha from Havana in Katutura.

(SOURCE: *Namibian*, Windhoek)

NIGER

a. Vandals destroy 18 hectares of trees near Niamey: A group of villagers destroyed 18 hectares of trees owned by an agricultural research institute at Saga outside Niamey, Niger's capital, according to a report published by the daily, *Le Sahel*, June 17

Le Sahel reported that the vandals allegedly torched the plantation because it was allegedly appropriated from their grand parents illegally.

According to the director of the national agricultural research institute, Dr Guero Yaji, Saga villagers have for several years demanded the return of their ancestors' land now being used by the Technical Tropical Forest Centre (CTFT) research station.

The villagers first raised the claim in 1970. However, the then ministry of rural development had ruled that the disputed land belonged to the government.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

NIGERIA

a. 'Plans to impeach Obasanjo is blackmail': Governor Bola Ahmed Tinubu of Lagos State has described threats by the National Assembly to impeach President Olusegun Obasanjo over non-implementation of the 2002 budget as cheap blackmail, it was reported, June 17.

The governor, who took a swipe at the legislators in an interview weekend, told newsmen that members of the National

Assembly were deliberately over-heating the system with their impeachment threats, capable of scaring away foreign investors.

"The threat of the impeachment of the President is a terrible thing. They (federal lawmakers) have to understand that there is no legislative blackmail in the process of democracy. They have to be reasonable".

[Background Info. Nigeria, page 727:b]

b. Police arrest six over robbery attack: Police in Ibadan have arrested six suspects over the armed robbery attack, June 4, at the Ibadan residence of the late pastor and deputy-director-general of the Christ International Evangelistic Ministry (CIEM), Samuel Folahan.

The state commissioner of police who confirmed this in Ibadan, June 6, said those arrested included three people said to be members of the Odua Peoples Congress (OPC); the driver of the family of the late Folahan as well as the man who introduced the OPC men to the widow of the late Pastor, Mrs Bola Folahan.

The arrested OPC members were those enlisted by the widow to keep sentry over the family residence of the late Folahan after a futile efforts by the family to secure police protection in the face of perceived threats to the lives and property of those Folahan left behind.

(SOURCE: *Post Express*, Lagos)

RWANDA

a. Kigali mass killer is hiding in Nairobi, says FBI: A Rwandese man wanted for his role in the 1994 mass murder in his country is hiding in Kenya, it was reported, June 13.

Felicien Kabuga, on whose head there is a \$5 million (Sh390 million) prize, has eluded a police dragnet on four occasions.

Attorney-General Amos Wako admitted, June 12, that "Kabuga had escaped arrest on four occasions at his hideout in the country in the last few months".

Dismissed defence lawyer wants payment for document: Attorney Andrew McCartan of Scotland, who was dismissed in February by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) as lead counsel of genocide suspect Joseph Nzirodera, has refused to hand over the case documents to the tribunal, it was reported, June 12.

Nzirodera's new attorney, Peter Robinson of the United States, told Internews that McCartan has declined to give him the materials for the case because the ICTR has not paid him \$30,000 for work done before his dismissal.

"He told me he would provide me with the material when he gets paid by the ICTR [hence] I am experiencing difficulty with this case," Robinson told Internews.

In a statement announcing McCartan's dismissal, the ICTR registrar stated that the attorney is "no longer eligible for assignment to an accused of the tribunal."

Ex-mayor Kanyabashi incited massacres of Tutsis: Former mayor of Ngoma and genocide accused Joseph Kanyabashi incited the killings of Tutsis in his commune, a prosecution witness told the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), June 6.

The thirteenth prosecution witness was testifying the trial of six people accused of genocide crimes in Butare province (south of Rwanda). They are former minister for family affairs and gender issues Pauline Nyiramasuhuko and her son Arsene Shalom Ntahobali, former Butare prefects Sylvain Nsabimana and Alphonse Nteziryayo and former mayors of Ngoma Joseph Kanyabashi and Muganza, Elie Ndayambaje.

The witness known only as "QP" for protection of her identity as a genocide survivor from the Ngoma commune. She alleged that on a certain date in the month of April 1994 she saw Kanyabashi in a vehicle traversing the sectors in the commune and making announcements using a public address system.

Background Info. Rwanda, page 727:a]

b. \$14m for HIV/AIDS drugs: The Rwandan government is to spend US \$14.64 million pledged in April by the United Nations Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, on antiretroviral drugs, the Rwanda News Agency (RNA) reported, June 14.

The money has been pledged over two years, with \$3.3 million for the first year.

Asked whether there were plans to reduce market prices of the drugs, the director-general of the Centrale d'Achat des Medicaments Essentiels au Rwanda, Ernest Rwagasana, said people should not expect instant reduction, but, if all went well, Rwandans could expect the drugs at cheap prices, RNA reported.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SOMALIA

a. Struggle to avoid more refugee deaths in Mandera: The United Nations refugee agency is continuing to seek permission to move a group of Somali refugees, vulnerable and living in terrible conditions just a short distance from the fighting which drove them from their homes, but has so far been refused permission to do so by the Kenyan authorities, it was reported, June 10.

The office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and partner aid agencies were "struggling to help vulnerable Somali refugees" in the ramshackle border zone camp in Mandera, northeastern Kenya, where 17 people - most of them children - had died of disease and malnutrition since June. Aid agencies have warned "that the Mandera population is under extreme stress, and the new refugee influx is putting a strain on its resources".

Some 10,000 Somalis moved into Kenya after two rounds of inter-clan fighting in Bulowale, inside Somalia across the border from Mandera, in April and May, but many of these have since moved back to settlements inside Somalia.

b. Somaliland urged to lift ban on private radio stations: The Paris-based media watchdog, Reporters Sans Frontieres (RSF), has called on the authorities in the self-declared republic of Somaliland to lift its ban on all privately owned radio stations, it was reported, June 17.

A circular issued by the Somaliland information ministry on June 5 said that until broadcasting regulations were laid down, there would be no private radio stations because of the "potential dangers" of such operations.

"No other voice can be heard on the air waves except Radio Hargeysa, which is the national voice," the circular said. Any broadcasting equipment already in the country should be surrendered to the information ministry, it said, warning that anyone found opposing the contents of the circular "will be brought before a court of law".

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SOUTH AFRICA

a. Anti-Thabo plot claimed: A former United Democratic Front (UDF) grouping, backed by African National Congress chiefs in the North West province, is "plotting" to undermine President Thabo Mbeki, sources close to the ANC leadership has claimed.

In the latest intrigue to emerge in advance of the ANC's national conference in December, the sources said moves were afoot to delink the presidency of the country from that of the party. The agenda, they said, was to weaken Mbeki's control of party structures, it was reported, June 14.

They pointed to the fact that a review of the ANC's constitution features on the agenda of the party's provincial conference in the North West, which started, June 13. It was the first province to debate the issue.

A computer disk containing the proposal had been circulated in various provinces, they said.

b. King arrested: High profile businessman Dave King was arrested, June 13, by the crime fighting unit, the Scorpions on tax evasion charges totalling approximately R900m.

"It's the best day I've had for three months," said King, who claimed that he presented himself to the Scorpions for what was "a very procedural and courteous" event, it was reported, June 13.

"King was arrested on 11 allegations of fraud this morning", said Scorpions spokesperson, Sipho Ngwema, who said that the case has now been postponed to the 20th of September.

"I just wanted to get the charges behind me" said King of the criminal charges, which were brought against him.

"I didn't want it sitting there month after month, not knowing when they might come and arrest me", said King. So, instead of waiting patiently for the moment, King approached the Scorpions directly and arranged to appear in court, June 13.

provide a guarantee for the bail and allow the investigation to proceed. "There were discussions between us and King's lawyers about the arrest" said Ngwema, who admits that the court date was a pre-arranged affair.

c. Couple killed on farm, son kidnapped: A couple was killed and their 13-year-old son kidnapped by gunmen in Wartburg, New Hanover, during the early hours of June 15, KwaZulu-Natal Midlands police said.

Captain Joshua Gwala said the owner of Aussicht Farm, 59-year-old Robin Dent, was confronted by several armed intruders after investigating a noise inside his house around 3.30am "Dent's wife Allison, 59, and their son, Nicholas joined him (Robin). An altercation ensued with the intruders and... in the process, Robin and Allison were shot and fatally wounded.

Suspect in Pretoria bus attack arrested: A man sought in connection with a murderous bus attack in Pretoria more than two years ago was arrested, June 14, police announced in Pretoria.

Jan Gabriel De Wet Kritzingier, 30, was taken into custody at Nylstroom in the Northern Province, the office of National Police Commissioner Jackie Selebi said in a statement.

"Kritzingier is presently in police custody and the investigation is continuing." Police have since February 2000 been searching for Kritzingier after what appeared to have been a racially-motivated attack in Constantia Park, Pretoria.

Three black people died and four were wounded on January 12 that year when a white gunman boarded a Mamelodi-bound bus and opened fire on the passengers without saying a word. He drove away on a motorcycle.

d. SA ship to rescue 107 trapped in Antarctic: A South African rescue team bound for the icy Antarctic continent will sail from the Port of Cape Town, June 16, in a bid to save 107 people trapped there aboard an ice-bound ship.

The Antarctic Logistics Centre International (ALCI) said, June 15, that the trapped vessel, the 18000 ton *Magdalena Oldendorff*, was currently positioned in the Muskegbukta fjord.

The fjord is some 400km away from an inland Russian research base but it is close to the old South African Antarctic base. There are 71 Russian scientists and 36 German crew aboard the ship, anxiously awaiting the arrival of the "S.A. *Agulhas*", a South African ice-strengthened research vessel, ALCI said.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

SUDAN

a. Lord's Resistance Army kills captives in Sudan: Over 50 children abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) were recently killed by the rebels in the Imatonga and Acholi mountains in Sudan on the orders of their leader Joseph Kony.

A significant number of captives also died of hunger, it was reported, June 17.

Former LRA captives, Catherine Acayo, 15, and Charles Nyeko, 26, who recently escaped from the rebels, made the revelation to *The New Vision* at Ngomoromo. "Many of our friends, mainly abducted children like us and others born in captivity, were killed on Kony's orders in March in the mountains in Sudan. "The victims included those who were too sick to walk or fight. The young died mainly of hunger, especially during the time the UPDF had surrounded us (LRA)," they said.

The UPDF fourth division commander, Col. Andrew Gutti, confirmed that 30 to 50 children had either been killed by the rebels or died of hunger during the UPDF's 'Iron Fist' operation in southern Sudan.

[Background Info. Sudan, page 730:b]

Sixty-six Kony rebels killed: A top Joseph Kony's commander, Lt. Col. Otim Okello Lumumba, and 66 other rebels were killed, June 5, by the UPDF in Sudan.

Lumumba, the rebel chief of Signal, was shot during a fierce battle at Imotong Hill, about 30 miles from the Uganda-Sudan border.

His body was flown, June 5, in a UPDF helicopter gunship to Gulu's UPDF fourth division headquarters and later taken to Gulu Central Police Station mortuary for viewing by relatives.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SWAZILAND

a. King's actions harm democracy, unions: Swaziland's absolute monarch, King Mswati III, has moved to quell any protests against a new constitution that will entrench his rule, it was reported, June 6.

Mswati has promulgated the Internal Security Bill 2002, which is likely to be passed by a parliament lacking any opposition parties and made up entirely of Mswati loyalists.

The Bill seeks to make it illegal for people to wear any political colours, display flags, or participate in political rallies. It complements the 1973 decree that banned political parties in the kingdom.

Swaziland's Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU) president Africa Magongo said, June 6, that the federation and its partners, civic organisations and political movements, were planning to hold mass protest action against the proposed new constitution.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

TANZANIA

a. Rebel group ready for ceasefire talks: A group of Burundi rebels has assured the Tanzanian government of its commitment to ceasefire talks with political and military leaders in Burundi's capital, Bujumbura, "as soon as possible", the Tanzanian foreign ministry announced, June 7.

The undertaking was the outcome of discussions held by the Conseil National pour la Defense de la Democratie-Forces pour la Defense de la Democratie (CNDD-FDD) - held with the Tanzanian government in Dar es Salaam between May 28 and June 3.

The discussions centred on the components of what would constitute the ceasefire accord, and were a follow-up to a meeting held with the Tanzanians from March 13 to March 20.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

TUNISIA

a. President Ben Ali receives Sorella Natura Award: During a ceremony held in Carthage, June 1, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali received the international Sorella Natura Award for Economy and Sustained Development.

Speaking at the ceremony, Roberto Leoni, president of the Sorella Natura Foundation, explained the reasons why President Ben Ali was chosen as the first recipient of the award.

"First, it is granted in recognition of all your endeavours," he said addressing President Ben Ali, "both in your country and at the international level, to promote an economy based on solidarity and respectful of the natural environment; your policy has scored great successes in Tunisia, a country for which you have secured both progress and sustained development, taking into account environmental requirements.

(SOURCE: *Tunisia Online*, Tunis)

UGANDA

a. Four URA officers arrested: State House and other investigators have smashed a Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) racket which has allegedly been aiding purported exporters to receive cash payments under the export tax refund policy, was reported, June 7.

Four senior URA officials, one of them a commissioner, were arrested in Kampala, June 6, in connection with the fraud.

The suspects allegedly caused a sh338m loss to URA but a March 4 audit report said up to sh2.5b could have been lost under the policy called the Duty Drawback refund.

Those picked up were Martin Feta, commissioner of large taxpayers' department, Felix Odong Kar and Sam Manana, both assistant commissioners for audit under duty drawback division and Paul Tumuhairwe, a principal revenue officer. Two other suspects are yet to be apprehended.

Under the duty drawback policy, duties paid on inputs for production of exports are refunded to make them competitive.

b. Journalist gets asylum in US: A journalist who fled the country in April 2001, citing alleged torture by security operatives has been granted asylum in the US, it was reported, June 17.

Paul Kato, 25, formerly a Media Plus reporter and cameraman was also linked to former presidential candidate Col. Kizza Besigye's campaign team.

Lawyers Sara Robinson and Rita Patel of Verner Liipfert working with a Washington based law firm represented him.

Radio presenter found dead: Radio Uganda's long serving presenter David Diba Ssegawa, 43, who disappeared in February was found dead in Luwayo village, Najjembe sub-county, Mukono district, it was reported, June 14.

The Police and residents of Luwayo village recovered Ssegawa's decomposed body in the forest, June 11.

Diba, a resident of Kanyanya village, went missing from his home on February 25 and several announcements were put on Radio stations. He was known for his humorous morning programme 'Matalisi' on Radio Uganda and hosts of several talks shows.

c. Cholera kills 27 in Hoima village: About 10 people have died and over 50 were admitted to health centres in the district, following an outbreak of cholera at Kaiso landing site in Buseruka sub-county, it was reported, June 13.

The director of health services, Dr. Mathew Emel, said the epidemic first broke out in May and since then over 200 people have been affected and 27 deaths recorded.

He described the situation at the Lakeshores, about 30 miles from Hoima town, as "very worrying."

He said the Congolese who are fleeing ethnic clashes in their country were the worst hit.

(SOURCE: *New Vision*, Kampala)

ZAMBIA

a. Levy dismisses interference in corruption investigations: There is no political interference in the investigation of corruption, President Levy Mwanawasa said.

In an interview with a foreign journalist at State House, June 13, President Mwanawasa said the government had given political will towards the fight against corruption as well as strengthening the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

"I have given political will. I cannot say there is political interference. Whenever they are investigating a senior leader, they inform me yes, but I have almost invariably said go ahead with your job. So we are not interfering," President Mwanawasa said.

He said the aim of the government was to target conditions that make corruption conducive and to that effect was working towards strengthening government procurement systems and awarding of contracts.

President Mwanawasa also said the government was working towards improving conditions of service for public workers in an effort to deter them from engaging in corrupt practices.

b. Judge Banda orders Petauke police to arrest MMD thugs: Ndola High Court judge Japhet Banda has ordered Petauke police commanding officer to arrest all thugs who assaulted the electorate during the past presidential and general elections in the district, it was reported, June 12.

Judge Banda said Petauke police station officer in charge Mbangu Mbangu's failure to arrest MMD youths suspected to be involved in assaulting the local people encouraged disobedience of the law.

"Go and arrest them. You are encouraging disobedience of law by not arresting people who are committing offences," judge Banda said.

Mbangu, who is assistant Superintendent, explained that he could not effect the arrest because material evidence had been withheld by the Forum for Democracy and Development (FDD).

c. Woman pays K600,000 for eloping with a married man: A 32-year-old woman who eloped with a 58-year-old married man has been ordered by a Lusaka local court to pay K600,000 to her lover's wife for causing problems in the 26-year long marriage.

This was in a matter in which Medina Banda, 48, of George compound sued Jessy Mbewe for marriage interference, alleging Mbewe had caused problems in her marriage to Eli Banda.

Medina told justices Godfrey Banda and Henry Mwanashiku, that Mbewe, who also attends the Seventh Day Adventist like her- envied the life she (Medina) was living and ended up committing adultery with her husband.

(SOURCE: *Times of Zambia*, Lusaka)

ZIMBABWE

a. Police arrest 170 MDC supporters: Nearly 170 MDC supporters, including 11 top officials in Birchenough Bridge, Chipinge North, were beaten up and arrested, June 13, by heavily armed police after attending their party's gathering in the area.

Among those arrested are James Mkwaya, the provincial organising secretary, Prosper Mutseyekwa, the vice-chairman, Lloyd Mahute, chairman, and Christine Chishakwe, the provincial vice chief of the women's league Pishai Muchauraya, the MDC provincial spokesman said.

The MDC members were arrested at Mapari holiday resort.

"After the police denied us room to hold our rally in the area, we went to Mapari holiday resort centre where we held our meeting peacefully. In the middle of our meeting, armed police

suddenly surrounded us in a cow-horn formation similar to that used by the Zulus under Chaka and beat us up indiscriminately for no reason," Muchauraya said.

b. Arrested for vandalism: Police in Matabeleland South have arrested two white commercial farmers for allegedly vandalising irrigation equipment at their three farms which were designated for resettlement.

Police spokesman, Inspector Alfred Zvenyika said, June 15, Endersby Drammond who owned Lyndmill and Malungwane farms in Esigodini and James Rawstone of Mpopoti section of Debshan Ranch near Filabusi would face charges under the recently-enacted Land Acquisition Amendment Act.

Drammond allegedly removed irrigation equipment from his two farms while Rawstone is said to have vandalised engine rooms at Mpopoti section of Debshan Ranch.

The two are expected to appear in court once police investigations have been completed.

[Background Info. Zimbabwe, page 696:b]

c. First trial of a journalist under new press law: Andrew Meldrum will appear in court, June 12, as the first journalist to be tried under Zimbabwe's new press law.

Andrew Meldrum, who is correspondent for the British newspapers *The Guardian* and *The Economist* and for Radio France International (RFI), is charged with "abuse of journalistic privileges by publishing falsehoods" and risks two years imprisonment if convicted.

"We call on the judiciary to show their independence of the government and to do all they can to see that the charges against him are dropped," said Reporters Without Borders secretary-general Robert Minard. "He was simply doing his job and nothing can justify his imprisonment for this."

"Usually when journalists are arrested in Zimbabwe, they are freed on bail almost immediately, after which the case drags on for years and very rarely comes to anything," he said.

"In this instance, the government seems to have decided to fast-track the case and apply this very repressive law."

Andrew Meldrum quoted in *The Guardian* an item from the Zimbabwean paper *Daily News* that said militants of the ruling ZANU-PF party beheaded a woman in a village in northwestern Zimbabwe.

A few days later, the *Daily News* said there was no proof this had happened and apologised to the ZANU-PF.

[Background Info. Zimbabwe, page 742:a]

(SOURCE: *Independent*, Harare)

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ANGOLA

a. 1.5 million need food aid, says UN: About 1.4 million Angolans are urgently in need of food aid until April 2003, a joint UN Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) and World Food Programme (WFP) report said, July 1.

UN Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Kenzo Oshima, will arrive in Luanda, July 2, to begin a five-day visit to Angola. The Organisation for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) office in Luanda said: "The purpose of Oshima's visit is to assess the current humanitarian situation and to call the attention of the international community to the humanitarian crisis in the country.

"During his meetings with representatives of the Angolan government, UN agencies, the diplomatic corps and NGOs, Oshima will also discuss the resettlement of displaced populations and the provision of humanitarian assistance. Field visits to the critical regions of Bie and Moxico provinces are also scheduled during the mission in order to have a first hand view of the humanitarian situation and current relief activities."

(SOURCE: *Namibian*, Windhoek)

Background Info. Angola, page 757:a]

BENIN

a. Police smash fuel pipeline syndicate: The police in Benin have arrested two men over alleged vandalisation of petroleum pipeline at the new Benin bye-pass near Oluku junction, it was reported, June 18.

Edo State Police Command Commissioner, Tunji Alapini, who conducted Governor Lucky Igbinedion round the scene of the alleged crime, said the suspects were arrested by men of the Ekiadolor Police Division, but assured that dragnet had been spread to arrest the leader of the syndicate.

Alapini said the vandals had fully loaded a tanker vehicle, marked XA 213 JRT with Premium Motor Oil (PMS) or petrol but got stuck while trying to leave the scene of the operation.

The gang members were said to have mobilised another trailer to pull out the demobilised vehicle, before the policemen who had been positioned at the spot, swung into action, arresting two of them.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BOTSWANA

a. Canadian group protests Basarwa plight: The worldwide campaign for the Bushmen of the Central Kalahari Game Reserve in Botswana has received a publicity boost on the sidelines of an international diamond conference in Canada, June 17.

Vancouver Island Public Interest Research Group (VIPIRG) demonstrated outside the World Diamond Conference because they believe the real reason the Basarwa are being removed is because of the government's mining interest in the reserve.

About 700 people are contesting their removal from the reserve—which they consider their ancestral land and burial grounds—to resettlement camps.

VIPIRG member Jessica Asch said: "We wanted to add our voice to the growing concern about the impact these forced removals will have on the indigenous people and their way of life.

We are determined to stand in solidarity with the Bushmen. We want the people of Botswana to know that although they are on the other side of the world, we are concerned and will continue to highlight their plight."

[Background Info. Botswana, page 649:a]

b. MPs hail Uganda on AIDS: A delegation of members of parliament from Botswana was in Uganda to study how the country coped with the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

The delegation comprising four MPs, James Mothibamele, Robert Molefhabangwe, Rakwadi Modipane and Gobopang Duke Lefhoko, June 17, held talks with the Speaker of Parliament Edward Ssekandi and commended government for putting in place measures to prevent and fight HIV/AIDS.

During a meeting with the committee of parliament on social services, the head of delegation, James Mothibamele, said that they want to learn from Uganda because it is held in high esteem as Africa's success story in the fight against HIV/AIDS. He said that unlike Uganda, there is a lot of stigma directed towards people living with HIV/AIDS in Botswana and has constrained government efforts to fight the scourge.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Botswana, page 650:b]

BURUNDI

a. Former President returns from exile: Former Burundi President Jean-Baptiste Bagaza returned home, June 29, after four years of self-imposed exile, saying he wanted to take part in the nation's political life, news organisations reported.

"I am delighted by this opportunity offered to me to return to the country where I was born," he said on Burundi Radio. "What will I do? I will just do what you are doing. I will make my contribution, at my own level, to the betterment of life."

Under the Arusha agreement of August 2000, a Burundi analyst said, all former presidents are de facto members of the Senate, the higher chamber of parliament. He said that the timing of Bagaza's return constituted an advantage for the former military ruler. "He is very good at exploiting difficult situations," he said. These include an almost collapsing economy, nationwide teachers' strike, and increasing rebel attacks along highways and on the eastern and southern border with Tanzania, the analyst added.

Tutsis, frustrated by the war continuing to be waged by two Hutu rebel groups—the Forces National de Liberation, and the Force pour le Defense de la Democratie—would like a strong leader like Bagaza, the analyst said.

b. Amnesty condemns reprisal killings: Failure on the part of the Burundi transitional government to condemn the increasing number of killings of civilians perpetrated by its armed forces amounts to acquiescence, said Amnesty International.

In a report issued, June 24, entitled "Punishing the Population - Reprisal Killings Escalate", the rights body documented the Burundi army's deliberate killing of unarmed Hutu civilians in reprisal for military activity by Hutu-dominated rebel armed political movements.

"None of these killings are known to have been investigated, or even publicly condemned by state authorities," Amnesty reported.

It also documented human rights abuses by the rebel groups in "repeated killings of unarmed civilians in multiple ambushes on civilian transport", stating that "armed political groups are continuing to unlawfully kill those who fail to contribute financially to their organisation, suspected informants and captured soldiers".

(SOURCE: *New Vision*, Kampala)

CAMEROON

a. Cameroonians vote despite World Cup tournament: Cameroonians found themselves trapped between their passion for soccer during world cup tournament and electioneering for parliamentary and municipal elections, June 23.

The timing was telling and as they went to polls, June 23. They did so with disturbed feelings.

Cameroonians are both lovers and 'winners' of football. They follow the game with passion and anxiety and are easily able to detect foul play.

(See Senegal, page 776)

Therefore the decision of President Paul Biya, number one supporter of the national team, the Indomitable Lions, to programme the municipal and legislative elections in the midst of World Cup tournament in Korea and Japan was evidently a political foul play.

Unfortunately for Biya and Cameroonians, heightened expectations suddenly dropped as the Indomitable Lions were eliminated from the competition about two weeks before election day. The players, a large delegation of officials and supporters were back home in time to begin anew and join the rest of the population in electing both parliamentarians and municipal councillors.

C' wealth team: The Commonwealth Secretary-General announced, June 19, that he was sending a Commonwealth expert team to be present at the National and Municipal Elections in Cameroon.

The Team has been constituted in response to an invitation from the President of Cameroon and will comprise Khotso Khasu, Provincial Electoral Officer, North-West Province, Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa (team leader), and Ruth Coleman, Leader, North Wiltshire District Council, United Kingdom.

They will be accompanied by two Commonwealth Secretariat staff members: Judith Pestaina, Special Adviser, Political Affairs Division, and Martin Kasirye, Senior Programme Officer in the same division.

Under its terms of reference, the expert team is "to consider the arrangements for the National Assembly and Municipal Elections, the overall electoral environment in which the elections are taking place and the poll, the count and the results process.

The team will submit a report to the Commonwealth Secretary-General, who will inform the Ministry of Territorial Administration and the National Electoral Observatory of its findings."

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

a. Brazzaville, Bangui centres for diamond smuggling: The capitals of the Republic of Congo, Brazzaville, and the Central African Republic, Bangui, are being used as conduits for the illegal smuggling diamonds from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Partnership Africa, Canada and the Belgian International Peace Information Service said in a joint report, June 19.

In their report, entitled "Hard Currency: The Criminalised Diamond Economy of the Democratic Republic of Congo and its Neighbours", they said US \$100 million-worth of illicit and conflict diamonds passed through Bangui each year, and hundreds of millions of dollars worth through Brazzaville.

While CAR produced diamonds of its own, official exports were significantly lower than the volume of diamonds appearing on international markets, said the report.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

CHAD

a. Chad-Cameroon pipeline project: The US House subcommittee on Africa, June 13, pondered the potential benefits and pitfalls of the Chad-Cameroon Oil Development Project.

The project will develop several oil fields in Southern Chad and export the crude by a 30-inch underground pipeline some 350 miles to a marine terminal off the coast of Cameroon, it was reported, June 18.

It is expected to produce approximately one billion barrels of oil over the 25-30 year life of the project. The partnership involved in the US\$3.5 bn effort "between energy companies, the World Bank, and the governments of Chad and Cameroon is unprecedented," said subcommittee Chairman Ed Royce.

However, according to Peter Rosenblum, associate director of the Harvard Law School Human Rights Program, "The project still provides only a rough outline for protecting the interests of the population."

He told the subcommittee: "Chad is not Sudan and it is not Nigeria, but there is much in common, including the risk that a militarised North will become dependent on oil from a disenfranchised South."

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

CONGO

a. Calm prevails in second-round legislative elections: Calm prevailed, June 23, in Brazzaville, capital of the Republic of Congo, as voters went to the polls in the second round of nationwide legislative elections.

With only a few authorised vehicles allowed on the roads—an effort to inhibit transport of voters among various voting districts to cast multiple ballots—people walked freely in the streets. Soldiers and policemen at intersections throughout the city appeared at ease, a week after a new outbreak of fighting in the capital. By dusk, all vehicles were allowed on the roads again.

Voter turnout in several districts was low. In Ouenze and Moundali, two of the city's northern districts that were particularly affected by the fighting, officials did not deny that perhaps just 15 per cent of those eligible had voted.

But an official in Ouenze said just holding the elections at all was an achievement, given the fighting. "We should congratulate ourselves on having accomplished this much," he said.

[Background Info. Congo, page 759:b]

b. Red Cross evacuates dead, wounded: The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said, June 13, that with the help of Congolese Red Cross volunteers it had evacuated scores of dead and wounded following fighting which broke out in Brazzaville.

So far, the ICRC has taken 17 people to the city's hospitals and transferred 19 bodies to the city morgue. In its statement, June 11, the ICRC said it had also provided the military hospital with medicines, dressing materials and supplies for treating bone fractures.

In doing so, it had maintained "close contact" with the military and police so as to ensure the safety of its field staff. This factor, it added, had enabled ICRC delegates and local Red Cross volunteers, "to carry out their humanitarian work without incident or hindrance".

ICRC conducted a needs assessment of the displaced, June 17. Two days earlier, the UN Humanitarian Coordination Office in Brazzaville said at least 10,000 people had fled the city during the two days of fighting between government forces and Ninja militias.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Congo, page 759:a]

CONGO(DR)

a. ADB approves US \$800 million for arrears clearance scheme: The African Development Bank and the African Development Fund jointly approved, June 26, a mechanism designed to help the Democratic Republic of the Congo clear arrears of US \$800 million to the two organisations.

The bank reported that the sum represented 60 per cent of the total arrears.

The bank's approval follows similar action by the IMF and the World Bank, "paving the way for the re-engagement of the DRC with the international financial institutions and the international donor community", the African bank reported.

The Congo, which has been at war for almost a decade, had accumulated heavy arrears to these institutions. "However, within the last year and a half, the country has made substantial progress towards restoring peace and economic stability," the African bank said.

The government had adopted an economic reform programme in mid-2001 that, the African bank said, had gained the support of the international community.

The programme had succeeded in taming hyperinflation and, more generally, in laying the groundwork for the restoration of macroeconomic stability.

b. DRC marks 42nd Independence anniversary: The Democratic Republic of Congo, June 30, commemorated its 42nd independence anniversary from Belgian colonial rule with a colourful military display at a ceremony attended by five heads of State, including President Mugabe of Zambia and Belgian Deputy Prime Minister Louis Michel.

At a ceremony lasting close to two hours outside the Stadium of Martyrs in Kinshasa, formations from the country's army, airforce, navy, police and prison services mounted mass displays, while jets and Russian-made MI helicopters flew past.

The military parade, the first since the late DRC leader Laurent Kabila took over as president after toppling dictator Mobutu Sese Seko in 1997, were reviewed by DRC President Major-General Joseph Kabila.

War veterans marched alongside newly graduated army officers, followed by members of the country's civil society, as tens of thousands crowded the capital's main Boulevard Triomphal to watch the spectacle.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

IVORY COAST

a. Ouattara granted citizenship: Former Ivorian Prime Minister, Alassane Ouattara, who was barred from standing in presidential elections in 2000 because of a row over his nationality, has been officially granted citizenship, it was reported, June 30.

"We have the pleasure of informing you that the judiciary has accepted our application and has delivered a certificate of nationality to Alassane Ouattara," one of Ouattara's lawyers, Emmanuel Assi, told reporters.

BBC correspondent said there is relief in Ivory Coast at the apparent end of the marginalisation of the prominent opposition leader. But the move also prompted a demonstration by hundreds of supporters of President Laurent Gbagbo, who set up barricades in the streets of the main city of Abidjan.

Opposition leader granted citizenship papers: An Ivorian judge, June 28, delivered a certificate of nationality to opposition leader Alassane Dramane Ouattara, confirming that the opposition leader is a citizen.

The issue of Ouattara's nationality had been a source of controversy for years. While Ouattara, a former prime minister, maintained he was Ivorian, his opponents claimed that he was Burkinabe. The nationality debate climaxed in 2000 when the Constitutional Court barred Ouattara on nationality grounds from participating in presidential and legislative elections. On both

occasions, the rulings led to violent street protests in which scores of people died. Since the decision was announced on state-owned television, localised street protests have taken place in the economic capital, Abidjan.

A group of protesters held a rally in front of the Abidjan court, July 1, to "demand an explanation" from the judge who issued the certificate of nationality to Ouattara, state radio reported.

b. Coup plotters convicted: A court in Ivory Coast has sentenced two men to 20 years in prison for their alleged involvement in a coup attempt in 2001, it was reported, June 26.

The prosecution described one of the accused, the businessman Ahmed Bassam, as the leader of the failed coup. In May six people were jailed for their involvement in the alleged plot, and eleven people were acquitted. A BBC correspondent in Ivory Coast said the exact details of the conspiracy were vague.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Ivory Coast, page 747:a]

EGYPT

a. Sarcophagus found: Archaeologists have found the world's oldest intact sarcophagus near the pyramids of Giza.

It could contain a mummy some 4,500 years old, Egypt's top antiquities official said, June 19. The limestone sarcophagus, two metres long and one metre wide, was unearthed about 2 km southeast of the Sphinx on the Giza plateau, said Zahi Hawass, chairman of the Supreme Council of Antiquities.

It belonged to an overseer of workers at the pyramids named Neni Sout Wizart, who lived in the fourth dynasty, he said.

"This is the oldest intact sarcophagus ever found. It dates back 4,500 years...to the reign of Khufu (Cheops), the builder of the great pyramid," Hawass said. Over 120 workers' tombs have been discovered around the three Giza pyramids.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, New Delhi)

ETHIOPIA

a. PEN International campaigning on behalf of journalists in prison: The Writers in Prison Committee of International (PEN International), started campaigning on behalf of Ethiopian journalists in prison, June 27.

The campaign, which is set to run in two different phases (one week for each) focuses on sending letters of appeal to the Ethiopian authorities protesting against the one-year sentence handed down to Lubaba Said, the former editor-in-chief of *Tarik* newspaper and three other journalists in prison, Melese Shine, Gizaw Taye Wordofa, and Tewdrose Kassa, and protesting against the constant harassment of independent journalists by means of court actions against them, according

to Kifle Mulat, Ethiopian Free Press Journalists Association (EFPJA) president. The first phase of the campaign, which is set to run from June 26 to July 2, 2002, Kifle said, would focus on demanding the immediate release of Lubaba Said and others.

Accordingly, letters of appeal would be sent to Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, minister of foreign affairs Seyoum Mesfin, and Minister of Justice Ali Suleyman, Ethiopian ambassadors to London and Washington, Fisseha Adugna and Kassahun Ayele respectively among others.

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

[Background Info. Ethiopia, page 471:a]

GABON

a. RSF rapps NePAD members: Reporters without Borders said, June 24, that freedom of the press in five of NePAD countries (Cameroon, Ethiopia, Gabon, Rwanda and Tunisia), is in jeopardy.

It said press freedom violations occur in the countries frequently and perpetrators are going unpunished.

"Although Reporters Without Borders can support this project, whose purpose is to promote 'peace, security, democracy, proper governance, the respect of human rights and sound economic management,' the organisation considers that NePAD's goals are unachievable in the absence of a free, independent and pluralistic press and that it is bound to fail as long as its member-states are not exemplary models for freedom of information", the organisation said in a statement issued in connection with NePAD-G8 summit in Canada recently.

(See also Regional, page 780)

"It is therefore up to the five Heads of State who are NePAD's key sponsors to set an example if they hope to gain credibility among their own peoples, the international community and their African economic partners. Yet, even in this respect, they fall short," the statement said.

"Reporters Without Borders is requesting the G8 Heads of State to do whatever is necessary to ensure that their meeting with the NePAD representatives results in concrete measures designed to protect press freedom in Africa, and abolish all prison terms for press offences other than incitement to hatred or murder.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

GUINEA

a. Presidents Jammeh and Conti sign joint communique: Gambian President Yahya Jammeh and his Guinean counterpart, President Lansana Conti have signed a joint communique in Conakry, it was reported, June 25.

President Lansana Conti extended warm greetings and commended President Yahya Jammeh for his laudable efforts in the settlement of conflicts in the sub-region.

President Jammeh also paid glowing tribute to President Conti for his personal dedication and the enormous sacrifices made towards the restoration of peace and security in the sub-region.

Both heads of state expressed their satisfaction with the achievements realised in the disarmament process in Sierra Leone which contributed to the successful conduct of peaceful and transparent elections recently in that country. They re-affirmed their commitment to sparing no effort in consolidating the peace process so far achieved in Sierra Leone.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

GUINEA BISSAU

a. Gambia shocked by Guinea-Bissau coup claims: The Gambian government has described as "untrue and unfounded" reports by Guinea-Bissau's President, Kumba Yala, that the Gambia was involved in two reported plots to overthrow the Bissau government.

Yala threatened to invade the Gambia during a meeting with foreign diplomats, civil society and NGO representatives on June 11. Yala said that he could "crush" the Gambia unless its government stopped "supporting subversive acts against the Bissau government".

The Gambia, he added, had been involved in coup attempts against his government in November 2001 and on May 20, news agencies reported. In a strongly-worded statement, June 17, the Gambian ministry for foreign affairs said President Yahya Jammeh and his government received the reports with "consternation".

"The government of the Gambia categorically refutes the allegations as untrue, unfounded, misconceived, regrettable and totally contrary to the spirit of good neighbourliness that the Gambia has been promoting and nurturing," the statement said.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

KENYA

a. KANU politician arrested: KANU politician Geoffrey Asanyo and former Nairobi town clerk Zipporah Wandera have been arrested.

Officers from the Kenya Anti-Corruption Police Unit accompanied by their colleagues from the Nakuru Criminal Investigations Department seized Asanyo at his Nakuru office, June 27.

In May 2002, Asanyo, a former Kisii KANU branch chairman, and Wandera were jointly charged with cabinet minister Sam Onger's wife, Elizabeth, city treasurer Peter Gathimba, water

and sewerage department general manager Lawrence Musyoka and businessman Philip Muniyao Nthiwa with defrauding the City Council of millions of shillings.

Asanyo and Nthiwa were accused of fraudulently obtaining Sh4.8 million from the council while Wandera and two others were accused of abusing the authority of their offices by arbitrarily procuring 64,140 water meters at Sh135.7 million.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

LIBERIA

a. 'No rule of law': An executive of the Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia (AFELL) has expressed fear that the rule of law is practically non-existent in the country, it was reported, July 1.

She cited murder and mayhem, arbitrary arrests and detentions, and worse kinds of torture meted out to individuals whose rights have been violated with impunity because of their political views, affiliation or simply on mere suspicion.

Cllr. Jamesetta Howard Wolokolie, first vice president of AFELL, said the church and society should not condone the arbitrary arrests and detention of people with impunity.

She pointed out that the church and civil society must get engaged with advocacy while addressing critical issues of social and economic justice and the promotion of human dignity which, she noted, are the fundamental elements of a holistic society.

b. Thousands flee Liberia: An estimated 4,000 people have fled to Sierra Leone from Liberia following a rebel attack, June 20, on Sinje refugee camp, northwest of Monrovia, the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said.

Almost 1,400 people – a mix of Liberians and Sierra Leoneans – crossed into Sierra Leone, the agency said in a statement. More were reported to be on their way, and large numbers had also arrived in Monrovia, it said.

So far, about 100 Sierra Leonean refugees and internally displaced Liberians had been relocated to one of UNHCR's five camps near Monrovia.

Thousands more were still believed to be hiding without resources in the forest and were at risk of being stopped and harassed by armed forces, UNHCR said.

In Sierra Leone, new arrivals were being hosted in a makeshift camp in the border locality of Gendema before being transferred to the Zimmi, farther inland. On June 22, gunfire was heard on the Liberian side of the border, causing panic among 1,200 new arrivals in Zimmi.

The makeshift camp was said to hold more than 2,000 people, UNHCR reported.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

MALAGASY

a. OAU may hold fresh polls: The Organisation of African Unity (OAU), June 22, proposed a "political and negotiated" settlement to the crisis in Malagasy stemming from rival claims to December 2001 presidential elections.

The conflict management body said at an emergency summit in Ethiopia that it would not recognise a government formed by either of the two rivals until a constitutional government was established. They must exercise maximum restraint and do their utmost "to restore peace, national unity and cohesion and the territorial integrity of Malagasy", the OAU said.

The marathon eight-hour session ended, June 22, and produced a statement urging former president Didier Ratsiraka and the self-proclaimed rival president Marc Ravalomanana to work out transitional arrangements in line with the April 18 Dakar Agreement.

US recognises Marc Ravalomanana: The United States government has officially recognised Marc Ravalomanana as President of Malagasy.

A letter from President George W Bush was presented to Ravalomanana, June 26, according to latest report.

The United States is the first world power to formally recognise President Ravalomanana since the dispute began between him and longtime president Didier Ratsiraka. Diplomatic sources say with the latest development, the U.S. is now set to conduct normal affairs of state with the government of President Ravalomanana.

Ravalomanana was sworn in as President in May following a recount of votes cast in December's disputed elections but his inauguration was not internationally recognised at the time.

[Background Info, Malagasy, page 762:a]

b. Plot to kill President claimed as crisis summit opens: President Marc Ravalomanana, June 21, accused his arch-foe of sending mercenaries to assassinate him, as African leaders gathered in Ethiopia to try to defuse a deepening six-month-old power feud on the Indian Ocean island.

"Reliable sources informed us that three helicopters left this morning from East London, in South Africa, with 36 mercenaries on board destined for the island of Sainte-Marie (off Malagasy's east coast)," Ravalomanana's spokesman, Raymond Ramandimbilahatra, said in Antananarivo.

"They have orders ... to assassinate President Marc Ravalomanana,"—who is in Malagasy—he added, reading from a statement. He later said that former President Didier Ratsiraka, who has refused to accept defeat in a December election, was behind the plot.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MALAWI

a. USAID gives US \$14 million to fight hunger: Malawi, battling to cope with critical food shortages, has been given US \$14.6 million in aid from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

The USAID granted, June 17, the government of Malawi what amounts to Malawian kwacha 1.1 billion as part of an ongoing cooperative effort to target poor sectors of the country.

Over three million people in Malawi will need food aid until March 2002, a joint Food and Agricultural Organisation and World Food Programme (WFP) assessment has found.

Roger Yochelson, USAID mission director, said in a statement that the funds would be used to import maize, continue support of the Malawi Environmental Endowment Trust and for family planning activities.

The US \$14.6 million brings the amount of aid given to Malawi to US \$20.6 million. It was the latest tranche of funds under USAID's performance-based non-project Assistance Programmes in the agricultural and environmental sectors, he said.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MOROCCO

a. Belqola's death a rude shock: The death of Moroccan referee Said Belqola was received with shock at the World Cup Football finals, days before the former customs officer was due for an honour, it was reported, June 23.

The 45-year-old arbiter was at the centre during the final of the 1998 championship, on July 12, when hosts France beat Brazil 3-0 at the Stade de France. It was history.

He became the first African to referee the final of football's most prestigious competition, and brought honour to himself, his country and the continent.

But he had been plagued by cancer for the past two years, and in December 2001, he could not attend the first leg, final of the CAF Champions League between Ahly of Egypt and Sundowns of South Africa.

CAF had planned to give him a befitting send-off at that match as he was due for retirement that month. "A very good referee, a gentleman to the core", said a statement from FIFA's office in Yokohama.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MOZAMBIQUE

a. Zimbabwean White farmers apply for land lease: At least 50 beleaguered Zimbabwean commercial farmers have applied for land leases to the Mozambican government after they were ordered

to cease operations or face imprisonment in Zimbabwe, it was reported, June 28.

Reports from Mozambique say 50 farmers have submitted requests for land leases since President Robert Mugabe's controversial land reforms took a turn for the worst with a May 10 amendment to the Land Acquisition Act.

(See Zimbabwe, page 779)

The amendment stipulates that a farmer should stop farming 45 days after being served with a notice of acquisition and subsequently vacate the property at the end of another 45 days.

Zimbabwean farmers are also relocating in Zambia, Uganda and Namibia.

There is also demand for them in Australia and New Zealand.

The Mozambican agricultural ministry said in a statement 13 Zimbabwean farmers had been allocated farming leases. Mozambique prohibits the sale of land to individuals or companies.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Mozambique, page 462:a]

NIGER

a. Publisher jailed in Niger: Abdoulaye Tiimogo, publication director of the satirical weekly *Le Canard dichanni*, was arrested on June 18, after Prime Minister Hama Amadou filed a complaint for "defamation".

Reporters Sans Frontiers (RSF) has urged the Prime Minister to withdraw his complaint and see to it that the journalist is released immediately.

"Abdoulaye Tiimogo has been arrested three times since October 2001 and has spent almost two months behind bars.

RSF secretary general Robert Minard has asked the prime minister to demonstrate his commitment to press freedom by reigning in his ministers, who "unrelentingly try to silence an investigative journalist who is especially critical of them."

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Niger, page 751:a]

RWANDA

a. PM favours community trials: Rwandan President Paul Kagame, June 18, officially launched a bold initiative in grass roots justice telling parliament that the only way to reconciliation following the 1994 genocide was for suspects to be judged by their neighbours.

Speaking in the National Assembly building Kagame called on Rwandans involved in the slaughter "to be courageous enough to confess to what happened and ask for forgiveness".

The first traditional court, called a *gacaca*, will convene, June 19.

Local people are elected from the community and trained as judges; they conduct community trials for those suspected for participating in the genocide, but not for those suspected of leading it. The maximum sentence is life in prison. Rwanda is turning to traditional justice to speed up trials for the 115,000 people detained for taking part in the government-orchestrated massacre of Tutsis and political moderates from the Hutu majority.

[Background Info. Rwanda, page 764:a]

b. Confidence building measures with Uganda: Defence ministers of Rwanda and Uganda have signed an agreement designed to build confidence and understanding between their once hostile armies, the Ugandan military spokesman, Maj Shaban Bantariza said, July 2.

The memorandum of understanding, signed, June 28, in the Ugandan capital, Kampala, by Amama Mbabazi of Uganda and his Rwandan counterpart, Brig-Gen Emmanuel Habyarimana, provides for an exchange of military liaison officers, exchanges of information between military intelligence chiefs of the two nations, and operational procedures for patrols and liaison officers who will monitor national parks in border areas.

"The agreement is an effort to normalise relations and attain lasting peace between the two countries," Bantariza said.

The measures adopted were agreed on during an 11-hour meeting between the two ministers, at the end of which they absolved both countries of harbouring dissidents opposed to their respective governments. Each nation had earlier accused the other of training rebels to overthrow their legitimate governments.

Extradition treaty signed: Uganda and Rwanda are to sign the first extradition treaty which will make it difficult for dissidents from one country to live other country.

Uganda's defence minister Amama Mbabazi and his Rwandan counterpart Emmanuel Habyarimana said in a communique, June 27, ministries of foreign affairs and Justice should have an agreed text in place for signature by President Museveni and Paul Kagame. The two presidents are to meet in Kigali in September.

"The ministers agreed that progress on confidence building measures in the security sector should be accompanied by a revitalisation of other bilateral links. They were briefed on the progress towards the extradition treaty between the two countries" the Communique read by the deputy chief of military intelligence, Major James Mugira, said.

(SOURCE: *Statesman*, Calcutta, *East African*, Nairobi and *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

SENEGAL

a. Rattle of resurgence rolls across Africa: When the World Cup 2002 kicked off with the fall of France, Senegal swayed to a silent beat that must accompany every conquest on the green patch.

On June 16, it was the turn of a rhythmic rattle of drums to roll from Japan's Oita to the heart of Africa. A whoop of joy rippled across Africa as Henri Camara struck gold—the second golden goal in the Cup's history—to stun Sweden and storm into the quarter finals.

Henri who?

"We had never heard of Henri Camara before. But, unfortunately, we have now and I don't think we will forget him". That was Sweden's captain Johan Mjallby, paying an unparalleled tribute to an opponent who outsmarted him to equalise eight minutes before halftime and again to secure the dramatic 2-1 winner 14 minutes into extra-time.

Someone else also will remember Camara forever. A Senegalese woman who gave birth in the northern town of Matam side she would name her son Henri Camara in honour of the double-scorer. The drummers among Senegal's fans who made it to the Big Eye stadium in western Japan, too, pounded out a message that the uninitiated could not ignore. Senegal has become the lone African team after Cameroon in 1990 to reach the final eight.

"I dedicate this win not only to Senegal but to Africa and also France," Senegal striker El Hadji Diouf said after the triumph. Diouf may have been referring to almost all his teammates' association with French clubs but the poignancy—and irony—of the tribute to the former colonial master could not be ignored.

The significance was not lost on the streets of Dakar, Senegal's capital. A wave of red, gold and green national colours, that topped even the party after Senegal beat France, engulfed Dakar. Some held high the pictures of Marabouts—spiritual leaders in the local brand of Islam—and thanked them for Camara's golden goal.

The celebration stretched from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean across an impoverished continent whose other standard bearers fell by the wayside in the first round. "Senegal's result is great for Africa", said Robert Loufimpou, a taxi-driver in the Congolese capital of Brazzaville. Suddenly Senegal has become the footballing capital of a soccer-mad continent and the centre of hopes that they can now beat either Japan or Turkey to reach the semi-finals.

Diouf, Ronaldo, others chase Golden Ball: Senegalese striker, El Hadji Diouf, is the only African among the 10 nominees selected for the Adidas Golden Ball award.

At a ceremony in Yokohama, Japan, June 26, the sponsors, Adidas, also named four Brazilians, two Germans and one each from Turkey, Spain and South Korea.

The other nominees are Rivaldo, Ronaldo, Ronaldinho and Roberto Carlos, all of Brazil. Others are Goalkeeper Oliver Kahn and Michael Ballack (Germany), Fernando Hierro (Spain), Hasan Sas (Turkey) and Myong Bo Hong (South Korea). The nominees were selected by the FIFA Technical Study Group.

(SOURCE: *Telegraph*, Calcutta and *East African*, Nairobi)
Background Info. Senegal, page 752:a]

SIERRA LEONE

a. Mines officials refute 1000-carat gem smuggling claim: Officials of the mines ministry have dismissed claims that a 1000-carat gem was recently smuggled out of the country.

The officials say the allegations made against diamond dealer Alhaji Bajaku Kabba of having smuggled over a thousand carat of gem out of the country are baseless and unfounded, it was reported, June 28.

Concord Times gathered that the Director of Government Gold and Diamond Office (GGDO), N'dollah Myers has denied claims of having knowledge over the said gems.

When contacted for his comment on the matter, Alhaji Kabba said: "I am a registered diamond dealer and does not believe in doing any transaction behind the scenes.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

Background Info. Sierra Leone, page 752:a]

SOMALIA

a. TNG urges intervention by foreign troops: The Transitional National Government (TNG) of Somalia has called for the deployment of foreign troops to disarm and demobilise armed militias, TNG information minister Abdirahman Ibbi said, July 1.

The decision to call for foreign troops was reached, June 29, by the council of ministers, and was ratified by the Transitional National Assembly (TNA), June 30, he said.

"The proliferation of weapons in the country has reached such proportions that the interim government cannot on its own manage to disarm the militias and collect the arms," he stated.

"Somalia is asking for the same kind of assistance, in both military and financial terms, that countries with similar problems, such as Sierra Leone and Bosnia, received from the international community."

Background Info. Somalia, page 765:a]

b. 200,000 face hunger as food crisis hits refugee camps: More than 200,000 refugees risk starvation following a food crisis, it was reported, June 21.

The predicament looms at the Kakuma and Dadaab refugee camps after the United Nation's agency drastically cut its food supply.

At Kakuma where current stocks can only last for two months, refugees fought over the food rations recently.

At Dadaab, the situation is likely to worsen with the recent settlement of a further 2,000 refugees from Somalia who had been stranded at Mandera Town for the past two months.

The food ration to both camps is now well below the recommended standard; 2,166kcal per person, per day.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SOUTH AFRICA

a. Apartheid victims' historic lawsuit: Lawyers acting on behalf of victims of apartheid began a series of legal actions seeking multi-million-pound damages against Swiss banks for supporting South Africa's former White government.

In what promises to become a landmark human rights case, Ed Fagan, the American lawyer who won \$ 1.25 billion (pounds 845 million) compensation for Holocaust survivors, lodged a \$ 51 billion class action lawsuit in a Manhattan courtroom against the Swiss banking giants UBS and Credit Suisse, it was reported, June 19.

Representatives of the Swiss banks expressed astonishment at the new legal action, saying claims that they were responsible for the horrors of apartheid were absurd.

Karin Rhomberg, a spokesperson for Credit Suisse, said: "We are against all forms of racism. It is absurd that our group should be held responsible for the wrongs of the apartheid system. There is no factual evidence to back this".

The Alpine banking giants have been singled out because of their role in helping the government of P W Botha, South Africa's former President, reschedule its debts during the 1980s.

The case, which is expected to last several years and involve scores of banks, is being pursued in the US courts under ground-breaking legislation that allows foreigners to lodge human rights claims against companies doing business in America.

At the same time, Fagan filed an identical claim for compensation from the two banks in a Zurich courtroom, accompanied by Dorothy Molefi, the mother of Hector Pietersen, the first teenager killed by South African security forces in the 1976 Soweto uprising.

Mrs Molefi is one of 80 claimants represented in the lawsuit. Others include Siggibo Mpendulo, whose 12-year-old twin sons, along with three friends, died from multiple gunshot wounds during a botched operation by security forces and Nyameka Goniwe, whose husband, Mathew, was murdered by security police with three other anti-apartheid activists in the Cradock Four case.

The claims are expected to be the first in a barrage of lawsuits lodged against British, American, German and French companies accused of profiting from the apartheid regime during the UN trade embargo between 1985 and 1993.

b. Another 11 scientists airlifted off trapped German vessel: Another 11 scientists on the icebound German vessel *Magdalena Oldendorff* in the Antarctic were, June 28, successfully airlifted to safety aboard the polar supply ship the *SA Agulhas*.

That brought to 32 the number of scientists airlifted by Oryx helicopters from 22 Squadron, after 21 were airlifted to safety, June 27.

The *SA Agulhas* left Cape Town on June 16 on a mission to rescue 107 scientists on the *Magdalena Oldendorff* trapped in thick pack ice.

Helicopter pilots were able to fly to the stricken vessel after the *SA Agulhas* managed to sail within flying distance of the ship.

Spokeswoman for the department of environmental affairs and tourism Phildile Makwakwa said, June 28, that the second helicopter, which for safety reasons had taken off one hour after the first helicopter, would return later with 11 or 12 crew members.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg and *Statesman*, Calcutta)

[Background Info. South Africa, page 766:d]

TANZANIA

a. 281 killed in train accident: Over 281 people lost their lives on the spot in Tanzania's worst railway accident, June 24.

Dodoma regional commissioner, Isidore Shirima, put the number of survivors at about 700 with 371 in hospital with injuries.

By June 28, the death toll had reached 281 leaving the mourning nation bewildered as to what could have really caused the accident. A commission of inquiry has been appointed by the government to investigate the real cause of the accident. Foul play was ruled out.

The train from Tanzania's port of Dar-es-Salaam took off for a trek across the vast country with over 1,000 passengers to the lakeshore town of Mwanza, but half-way as it approached the capital city of Dodoma, 300 kilometres from Dar-es-Salaam it met its tragic end.

Reports said that it first failed to climb a hill, then stopped and within minutes it rolled back gathering up to a speed of 200 kilometres in reverse per hour.

Annan "deeply saddened" by train crash: United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan, June 25, lamented the loss of more than 200 people killed in one of the worst railway disasters in Tanzanian history, between the Tanzanian administrative capital of Dodoma and the central town of Singida.

Annan offered his heartfelt condolences to the families and friends of the victims and to the people and government of Tanzania, according to his spokesman, Fred Eckhard.

Annan wished Tanzanians "the strength to bear and overcome the heavy burden that the tragedy has placed on the country as a whole".

More than 200 people died and over 900 were injured after a passenger train run by Tanzania Railways Corporation travelling from the commercial capital of Dar-es-Salaam to Mwanza, the second-biggest town in Tanzania, on the southern shore of Lake Victoria, derailed after colliding with a goods train, overturning all but one of the passenger carriages.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

TUNISIA

a. Radhia Nasraoui begins an unlimited hunger strike: Tunisian lawyer Radhia Nasraoui, a human rights activist and a member of the Assembly of the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), began an indefinite hunger strike, June 26.

Ms. Nasraoui is demanding the release of her husband, Hama Hammami, who was sentenced to three years and two months' detention for his political opinions. She is also protesting against the harassment that she, her husband and her children have suffered.

Ms. Nasraoui has not been granted permission to see her husband - in her capacity as his lawyer - since early April, despite the fact that her husband lodged an appeal in the court following his sentencing on March 30, 2002.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

UGANDA

a. 45 held over mob violence: The police in Kamuli have arrested 45 people in connection with violence and causing damage in the district, it was reported, June 27.

They allegedly demolished three houses and slashed down two hectares of a cassava garden.

Kamuli district police commander Fred Ssekiwere said the suspects were arrested from Kyamatende village in Nabuwigulu sub-county. Police said the suspects blamed their victim, Bakaali Naku, of being responsible for the death of his neighbour, Stephen Musaana, who died recently.

"We have been told that the suspects alleged that Bakaali killed Musaana using witchcraft," Ssekiwere said.

b. Seven die in Nakasongola crash: Seven people died, June 25, on the spot and several others were admitted to various hospitals in critical condition, when their bus overturned at Namansa in Nakasongola district.

One body later identified as that of Charles Ogweng of Lira remained trapped under the bus until evening. Six other bodies including that of a woman were taken to Nakasongola health Centre mortuary, all of them badly mutilated.

The dead were identified as William Bua, 30, a Lira businessman, Lanek Wacha of Lira Medical stores and Jackson Nyeko, the manager of Town View Hotel in Lira. The woman was identified as Betty Mpebwa of Mukono. The other two victims could not be readily identified.

Nakasongola police officer George William Odongol blamed the accident on careless driving.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

ZAMBIA

a. Arrest those plotting to topple Mwanawasa, says Kenneth Kaunda: Dr Kenneth Kaunda, June 29, called for the immediate arrest of all those planning to topple and assassinate President Levy Mwanawasa.

Reacting to President Mwanawasa's revelation that there was a plot to topple and kill him, Dr. Kaunda said the move was "Satanic and unacceptable".

"This is unacceptable and I condemn it in strongest terms. All those involved must be arrested immediately," Dr. Kaunda said.

"You know I am hurt, my son Major Wezi Kaunda was assassinated and President Mwanawasa has parents. I wouldn't want them to feel the same." Dr. Kaunda described the political situation in the country as volatile.

"It is good that some things are coming out. Let us wait for the results," said Dr. Kaunda in apparent reference to revelations of Chief Justice Matthew Ngulube's corrupt practices.

"I cannot comment much on it because the situation is volatile." President Mwanawasa disclosed that he was aware that some people were planning to assassinate him because of his position in the fight against the economic plunder by the previous administration.

President Mwanawasa said he had detailed his security officers to closely watch and monitor the movements of those who were planning to oust the government unconstitutionally.

(SOURCE: *Times of Zambia*, Lusaka)

ZIMBABWE

a. White farmers lose rights over land: Around 2,900 White-owned farms in Zimbabwe have been ordered to cease operating after a controversial land reform law was amended to give the government sweeping powers to seize farmland for redistribution.

But many of the affected farmers ignored the deadline and continued their business, Commercial Farmers Union spokeswoman Jenni Williams said, June 24.

The government, May 10, amended the Land Acquisition Act to order farmers whose property has been earmarked for acquisition to stop farming 45 days after a notice of acquisition has been issued and vacate their property within 90 days.

For farmers who had been issued with government notices to take over their property before the law was changed, the 45-day notice period to stop farming came into effect from the day the law was passed.

"A lot...are just going to stay as they cannot stop farming in 45 days. We will have to stand our ground and see what happens," Williams said.

The affected farmers, according to CFU, represent about 60% of the White farmers who held some 4,800 title deeds, before the controversial land reforms turned violent two years ago, as government supporters calling themselves war veterans began occupying White farms and demanded that they be redistributed to landless Blacks.

Farmers challenge land reform laws: Hundreds of indigenous farmers allocated land by the government are facing massive resistance from some White commercial farmers who are going to court challenging land reform laws, which required them to stop farming, June 24.

The Commercial Farmers Union confirmed that farmers were seeking legal recourse but were doing so in their individual capacities.

"The CFU does not intend to file any legal action. We are, however, aware that there are individual farmers mulling legal action on the compulsory acquisition of their farms," said the CFU spokesperson, Ms Jenni Williams.

The number of farmers who were taking legal action against the government could not be established, June 27.

[Background Info. Zimbabwe, page 696:b]

b. Prison officials continue to defy court order to release suspects: Khumi maximum security prison officials have defied a Supreme Court order for the release of two men suspected of involvement in the murder of Cain Nkala and Limukani Luphahla, it was reported, June 27.

The prison officials have for the past two weeks defied a High Court order upheld, June 21, by the Chief Justice Godfrey Chidyausiku, sitting in the Supreme Court in Harare.

Chidyausiku ordered the immediate release of the two suspects, in custody for more than eight months for the alleged murder of Nkala, a former war veteran leader abducted from his home, then murdered.

Seven other suspects in the same case are out on bail granted only by the Supreme Court after the State had appealed against the order to grant the suspects, who are all MDC supporters, bail.

The fate of one of the suspects, Sazini Mpofu, remained unknown; June 26, after he was reportedly whisked away from the prison complex in a police vehicle to an unknown destination.

c. Seven suspected prostitutes arrested: Seven suspected prostitutes, who allegedly stripped for police officers on patrol after they mistook them for potential clients will regret their action after the police arrested them.

Alice Munyaradzi (20), Talent Mabika (20), Mercy Lobo (19) and four teenagers below the age of 18, June 19, appeared separately before magistrate Wilbert Mandinde on charges of loitering and soliciting for purposes of prostitution.

They all pleaded guilty to contravening the Miscellaneous Offences Act.

The seven were remanded to custody till July 5. Ms Faith Musinga, prosecutor told the court that, June 20, around 10 pm near a hotel in Avondale, the women who were clad in mini-skirts were stripping to attract motorists driving down King George Road.

She said when the seven discovered that they had attracted policemen, they attempted to run away but were apprehended.

d. Warrant issued against minister: The Zimbabwe High Court has issued a warrant of arrest against justice minister Patrick Chinamasa for his failure to appear in court, it was reported, June 26.

Chinamasa was supposed to appear before the court to answer to a charge that stemmed from his criticism of a six-month jail term imposed on three Americans convicted for illegal arms possession in 1999.

The minister is, however, reported to be out of the country.

Mugabe's spokesman, George Charamba, is to stand trial on July 15 for a similar offence after his criticism of a court ruling that ordered police to stop interfering in the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Union affairs.

e. Carjacker nabbed: Police in Harare raided a suspected carjacker recently and recovered three stolen vehicles, several motor spares and a pistol supposedly used in the robberies.

The 32-year-old man has since been linked to the robbery of at least four vehicles in Harare and Chegutu in the last five months, it was reported, June 10

Investigations are still underway to establish the exact number of vehicles stolen by the man, who was arrested by the Vehicle Theft Squad in Prospect, Waterfalls.

Interpol has since been invited to establish the origins of the vehicle and whether it has been reported stolen, police spokesperson for Harare province Inspector Cecilia Churu said, June 9.

Also recovered at the man's house was a kit used to punch fake serial numbers on stolen vehicles to facilitate clearance with the police.

(SOURCE: *Independent*, Harare and *Statesman*, Calcutta)

REGIONAL

a. Mugabe's shadow over G-8 summit: African leaders promoting the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NePAD), June 27, started bargaining for the endorsement of their recovery plan at the G-8 summit in Canada after they failed to resolve the crisis in Zimbabwe.

Presidents Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal and Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria, the key movers of NePAD, for the first time ever sat on the high table with leaders of the world's richest and most powerful nations to plead their case.

The meeting, which ended, June 28, at Kananaskis, Alberta, is a do-or-die for the African leaders. However, the Zimbabwean crisis - widely seen as a test case for NePAD—cast a huge shadow over their deliberations although the project will almost certainly be approved.

Despite committing themselves to a "peer review" mechanism to monitor each other's rule, the continent's heavyweights have been unable to halt President Robert Mugabe's incremental autocracy. Mbeki and Obasanjo have been trying since 2000 to resolve Zimbabwe's political and economic situation without success.

Western leaders, who have imposed targeted sanctions on Mugabe and his ruling clique in a bid to stop violence and repression, have criticised African leaders' failure to restrain Mugabe.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

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ALGERIA

a. Blast kills 30 in market: A bomb in a crowded market outside Algiers killed at least 30 people, July 5, and injured many others, hospital and security sources said.

It was the worst killing of civilians in a single attack in civil strife-torn Algeria in 2002, they said. The bombing came as the nation celebrated, July 5, the 40th anniversary of independence from French colonial rule after a savage war. It also occurred three days after the army Chief-of-Staff, Lieut Gen Mohamed Lamari, declared that the government has won its war against Islamic guerillas.

No group claimed responsibility for the bombing but security sources said the attack resembled many similar bombings in the past nine years.

(SOURCE: *Le Matin*, Algiers)

[Background Info. Algeria, page 721:a]

ANGOLA

a. EU aid for peace process: The European Union (EU) plans to release Euro 30 million (US \$29.6 million) to provide urgent support for Angola's peace process.

The funds fall within a Euro 125 million (US \$ 123.6 million) plan for humanitarian and rehabilitation projects in the country, Jeronimo Belo of the EU office in Angola said, July 11.

The amount would be used for sanitation, health, education and for the return of displaced people to their areas of origin. The programme would address vulnerable people in quartering areas, particularly demobilising UNITA soldiers and their families, and in areas now accessible to humanitarian organisations.

The work would be implemented by UN agencies, NGOs and the government. The funding was approved by the European Union Development Fund (EUDF).

The latest assistance, and a further US \$497,000 from Canada for food assistance, comes in the wake of an urgent warning from Kenzo Oshima, UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, that Angola needed help urgently.

Human Rights Watch raps UN: The United Nations and the Angolan government are not providing sufficient protection for thousands of people displaced during the civil war, Human Rights Watch said, July 3.

Internally displaced people (IDPs) in Angola continue to face serious security threats, including harassment by government

forces, restrictions on free movement, and possible forced return to areas where they would be at risk of political persecution and human rights abuses, Human Rights Watch said. Hundreds of thousands continue to live in poor conditions in government-run camps without access to basic food or medical care.

(SOURCE: *Namibian*, Windhoek)

[Background Info. Angola, page 769:c]

BURUNDI

a. Tanzania accused of backing rebels: The defence minister of Burundi, Cyrille Ndayirukiye, has accused neighbouring Tanzania of helping Hutu rebels in their offensive in Burundi.

Speaking on Burundian state radio, Ndayirukiye said, July 13, there was silence from the border officials over the activities of the rebels.

He accused Tanzanians of hypocrisy, saying that there was a contradiction when they talked about working for a ceasefire.

In June the Tanzanian foreign minister, Jakaya Kikwete, visited the Burundian capital, Bujumbura, with a ceasefire offer from one of the rebel groups.

(SOURCE: *New Vision*, Kampala)

CAMEROON

a. Opposition wants elections annulled: Church leaders and opposition politicians have described legislative and municipal elections held in Cameroon on June 30 as flawed.

The politicians have also called for the polls to be annulled, it was reported, July 8.

The bishops said in a communique published by the Cameroonian press, July 5, that many irregularities marred the polls. Their assessment was based on reports from election monitors deployed by the church.

Cameroon's churches had organised training in election monitoring for more than 3,000 local observers. The government accredited 50 for the polls.

According to the bishops, the monitors reported "serious and multiple violations of our citizens' freedom of voting by means of corruption through vote-buying, by setting up bogus polling stations, or through a system of selective registration on voters' lists and selective issuing of voter's cards".

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Cameroon, page 770:a]

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

a. Reforms essential, says UN Council: The United Nations Security Council has said reforms must be implemented in the Central African Republic, while welcoming the government's efforts to stamp out corruption and establish good governance.

In a statement issued, July 11, Council president Jeremy Greenstock of the United Kingdom, said the UN "encouraged the government to continue along this path and to take the national dialogue further forward". He added that he would be preparing a letter to the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the African Development Bank to ask them to "show consideration for the special circumstances in the country".

Finance minister Eric Sorongope-Zoumandji was arrested, July 9, and accused of embezzling public funds, a local news source said. This was part of an "ongoing campaign" since the beginning of 2002 to fight corruption, which had led to the arrest of about a dozen officials of the revenue, public finance, and national education services. All the arrested officials had been accused of embezzlement of public funds.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

CONGO (DR)

a. World Bank announces 80 per cent debt cancellation: World Bank president James Wolfensohn said, July 14, he had proposed the cancellation of more than 80 per cent of the Democratic Republic of Congo's US \$12-billion debt.

Speaking to reporters in Kinshasa, the nation's capital, he added: "Hopefully that will be decided in the first three months of next year."

He described the government's economic reforms, as extraordinary and as having created a base with a stable currency and budget. "It's amazing to think that inflation is less than 10 per cent when it was more than 500 per cent the year before," Wolfensohn said.

Following a rupture in relations between the World Bank and the DRC in 1993, cooperation was resumed in June with the announcement of a \$450-million loan. He said the money would be used to "focus on giving something to the people" - on projects to combat HIV/AIDS, to develop education and health, and the building of infrastructure.

b. UN peacekeepers disarm 16 more former Rwandan soldiers: UN peacekeepers have disarmed 16 more former Rwandan army soldiers in Beni, North Kivu Province, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Hamadoun Toure, the spokesman of the UN Mission said, July 10.

Toure told reporters in Kinshasa that 19 of 44 people the Ugandan-backed Rassemblement Congolais Pour la Democratie-Mouvement de Liberation (RCD-ML) brought to Beni proved to be combatants, three of them Congolese and the rest

Rwandans. "The remaining 25 were non-combatants, women and children," Toure said.

He added that what remained was to work out ways with the Rwandan government for the eventual repatriation of the disarmed soldiers.

The RCD-ML authorities said the 16 former soldiers had not been taking part in the war in the DRC.

c. Congo probe deadline extended: The government has again extended the term of the Justice David Porter Commission investigating the plunder of wealth from the war-torn DRC and fixed August 15 for the probe to hand over its findings.

"Our life has been extended to August 15. We shall then hand over our report. There are some witnesses in the army we need to interview again because we received fresh evidence from the United Nations panel.

"We need to verify it. They need to clarify certain allegations for us," the British expatriate judge said, July 4.

Porter, whose probe team has flown to the vast strife-torn country to interview armed anti-President Joseph Kabila opponents, handed over the team's interim report to Third Deputy Premier and foreign minister, James Wapakhabulo, mid-October 2001 and was to hand over the final report by February 6, 2002.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Congo (DR), page 434:a]

EGYPT

a. Police arrest 28 Islamic activists: Egyptian police have arrested 28 members of the banned Muslim Brotherhood, it was reported, July 15.

Those arrested were planning a demonstration in Cairo's al-Azhar mosque to "stir the public against the regime", according to police sources.

The Egyptian government has accused the Brotherhood—one of three main Islamic groups in Egypt—of encouraging Islamist-inspired violence. The Brotherhood insists it is seeking to establish an Islamic state using peaceful means.

The planned demonstration was in support of about 120 people arrested in Alexandria at the end of June on suspicion of belonging to the organisation and causing a disturbance, sources said.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, Madras)

[Background Info. Egypt, page 590:a]

ERITREA

a. UN urges parties to cooperate in border demarcation: The UN Security Council has called on Eritrea and Ethiopia to fully cooperate with the border demarcation process between the two countries.

In a statement, July 12, Council president Jeremy Greenstock of the UK said the process was a "key benchmark" for lasting peace between the two countries.

On April 13, an independent boundary commission in The Hague issued a ruling on the Eritrea-Ethiopia border, following a bitter two-year border war which broke out in 1998. The sides were due to meet commission officials in The Hague, July 15, to discuss demarcation.

The Security Council said the meeting was expected to "initiate full and effective cooperation by the parties in order to ensure an expeditious and orderly process".

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

[Background Info. Eritrea, page 354:a]

ETHIOPIA

a. Journalist jailed for two years for libel, incitement to violence: Reporters Without Borders protested, July 15, against a two-year jail sentence imposed on journalist Tewodros Kassa for libel and incitement to political violence and called on the Ethiopian government to abolish the country's harsh press law.

Urging Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi to see that he was freed at once, Reporters Without Borders secretary-general Robert Minard noted in a letter to him that "in general, prison sentences for defamation have been deemed by international human rights authorities as disproportionate to the offence."

The UN Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression, Abid Hussain, has said that imprisoning someone for their peacefully-expressed opinion is a "serious violation of human rights."

Minard called for the country's harsh 1992 press law to be abolished and the penal code to be liberalised to permit more free expression. He noted that Zenawi was on Reporters Without Borders' worldwide list of 38 predators of press freedom.

[Background Info. Ethiopia, page 772:a]

b. US donates money for refugees: Refugees in Ethiopia are to benefit from a US \$1.7 million donation from the US government to help make up food shortages, it was reported, July 11.

The move follows appeals by the UN World Food Programme (WFP) which warned it may be forced to cut rations to thousands of refugees because of a shortfall. WFP said the drop in calories would have hit refugee women and children hardest.

The pledge is part of a US \$12.4 million donation to the World Food Programme to "fill critical gaps" in refugee feeding across Africa. The \$1.7 pledge will also help with the massive voluntary repatriation programme for Somali refugees under way in eastern Ethiopia.

Tens of thousands of Somali refugees flooded into the country to avoid war at home and have been living in makeshift camps for the past decade.

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

GAMBIA

a. President withholds assent to media Bill: President Jammeh has sent the National Media Commission Bill back to the National Assembly, refraining from appending his signature on it due to a host of 'inappropriate' provisions, it was reported, July 15.

The Bill, which was passed by the National Assembly in May, was sent back to its members, who are being told to reconsider certain 'inappropriate' provisions, which according to confirmed reports was seen by the President as incompatible with some clauses in the Constitution.

Although the exact reasons behind Jammeh's decision are far from clear, *The Independent* has reliably learnt that the President had recommended that some clauses on the Bill deemed to run contrary to the spirit of the Constitution be deleted.

[Background Info. Gambia, page 736:a]

b. Internet helps drug trafficking: The Internet is being increasingly used by drug traffickers to improve the distribution and delivery of drugs globally, a report by the International Narcotics Control Board said, July 8.

Information technologies relating to the Internet create a serious challenge for developing effective anti-drug policies, the INCB warned. In its report for 2001, the INCB, a specialized agency of the UN, warns governments of the real danger lurking when the internet is left at the disposal of criminals and drug dealers who develop subtle means of distributing and delivering their drugs.

The report says as a result of this alarming trend the instant and long-term benefits of new technologies related to the Internet might be seriously undermined.

According to the report, drug traffickers use the instantaneous communication provided by Internet facilities to improve their distribution and delivery systems and render investigations into such activities difficult.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

GHANA

a. New partnership with Nigeria: The Nigerian High Commission in Ghana has initiated a programme aimed at increasing the volume of trade between Nigeria and Ghana, it was reported, July 9.

Christened the New Partnership for Nigeria/Ghana Development, the programme is also geared towards the rapid and sustainable development of the two countries.

The Nigerian High Commissioner to Ghana, Chief Sam Okechukwu, was speaking at the inauguration of the Forum of Nigerian Professionals (FNP) in Accra at the weekend.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

GUINEA BISSAU

a. Protest against arrest of journalists in Bissau: The arrest of two journalists in Guinea Bissau was "a clear breach of their right to freedom of expression," the World Association of Newspapers and World Editors Forum said in a letter of protest to President Kumba Yala, it was reported, July 3.

The Paris-based WAN and the WEF called on the government to halt the harassment of all journalists in the country.

"We are writing on behalf of the World Association of Newspapers and the World Editors Forum, which represent 18,000 publications in 100 countries, to express our serious concern at the arrest of journalists Joco de Barros and Nilson Mendonca, the letter said.

"According to reports, de Barros, publisher and editor of the independent daily *Correio de Bissau*, was arrested in Bissau on June 17, following his appearance on a talk show on the independent Radio Bombolom. During the interview, de Barros said that recent rumours of coup plots against Your Excellency were designed to divert attention away from government corruption and described recent military threats against neighbouring Gambia as 'pathetic', the letter added.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

IVORY COAST

a. Election chaotic, says opposition: Opposition parties in Ivory Coast have roundly condemned what they describe as chaotic conditions during local elections, July 7.

Reports from the capital Abidjan say turnout appeared to be low with would-be voters unable to cast their ballot, because they didn't have the right identity cards.

One opposition party blamed the government for the low turnout, saying President Laurent Gbagbo had refused to allow the same ID cards as in previous elections.

A prominent member of the opposition, Alassane Ouattara, said his RDR party wouldn't accept the results as legitimate.

There were angry scenes at polling-stations as officials refused to accept old-style forms of ID despite the government's own failure to distribute new cards to the whole population.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Ivory Coast, page 772:a]

KENYA

a. Police shoot at minister, MP: Assistant minister David Ekwe Ethuro and Turkana North MP John Munyes, July 14, narrowly escaped death when police opened fire at their vehicle at the Kakuma refugee camp.

Ethuro, who is a labour assistant minister and Turkana Central MP, and Munyes had just arrived at Kakuma when police

who were dispersing demonstrators shot at them, claiming they were there to incite locals.

The MPs had to retreat to their vehicle as police warned of bloodshed if the leaders dared alight.

But Ethuro's daring armed bodyguards returned fire at the police. There were no casualties.

On sensing danger, police who were on an open Land Rover drove off as they shot sporadically in the air.

The leaders then alighted and collected six spent cartridges fired by the police before proceeding to the Area District Officer's (DO) office to lodge a complaint over the incident.

b. Malaria claims 300 lives: Malaria, by all accounts a curable disease, has claimed nearly 300 lives countrywide in the past one month, it was reported, July 13.

At the health ministry headquarters, it has been talks and promises but little action.

Reports from hospitals, especially in Nyanza and Rift Valley, are horrifying. Most of the health centres are understaffed and operate without essential facilities and drugs. They have thus become death traps. The process for distributing drugs to the district and provincial hospitals is bureaucratic and cumbersome.

c. Population growth rate set to drop: Kenya's population growth rate is to drop from the current 2.8 per cent per annum to 2.0 per cent annually by the year 2010, planning minister Adhu Awiti said, July 12.

Dr Awiti said measures were being taken to curb population growth rate as an indirect strategy of reducing high level poverty in the country.

He said over the years, the country's rapid population growth rate has had adverse effects on the economy, thus affecting the quality of social services and the quality of lives of most Kenyans.

Awiti said so in a speech read on his behalf by the National Council for Population and Development (NCPD) director, ambassador Simon Bullu, during the World Population Day national celebration held at Eldoret's 64 Stadium.

The theme of the celebration was "Poverty, Population and Development".

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

LIBERIA

a. UNHCR concern over fate of 5 nurses: The office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said, July 12, it was concerned about the fate of five nurses taken hostage by the rebel Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) on June 20.

The nurses, who were working for a local non-governmental organisation, MERCI, were taken along with the NGO's ambulance during an attack on Sinje refugee camp, 80 km northwest of Liberia's capital, Monrovia.

The UNHCR was also increasingly concerned about thousands of Sierra Leonean refugees and displaced Liberians who fled Sinje camp in the wake of the attack, spokesman Kris Janowski told a media briefing in Geneva, July 12.

Sinje had housed some 24,000 people before the attack, Janowski said, noting that current heavy rains in the region meant that the condition of those remaining in the bush was almost certainly deteriorating. Some refugees who had been housed in Sinje had managed to reach Sierra Leone while others had gone to other refugee camps around Monrovia.

"They are famished, sick and exhausted from walking long distances," Janowski said. "They said some were too weak or wounded to manage the trek."

b. Journalist re-arrested: A prominent Liberian newspaper editor and three other Liberians have been detained without charge for more than a week, Human Rights Watch said, July 5.

The four are being held in incommunicado detention by the Liberian government, and may be at risk of torture and ill-treatment. The government has twice disregarded a court order to bring the detainees to court.

Hassan Bility, the editor of one of Liberia's independent newspaper, was arrested on June 24, 2002, together with Ansumana Kamara, Abubakar Kamara, and Blama Kamara. The detainees were taken to an unknown destination by two plain-clothes men reportedly from the criminal investigations division of the police.

At the time, minister of information Reginald Goodridge issued a public statement announcing that Bility and the others were being held on suspicion of operating a rebel terrorist cell in Monrovia.

Hassan is the most recent victim of the Liberian government's crackdown on the independent media, said Peter Takirmbudde, executive director of Human Rights Watch, Africa division. His detention is intended to send the message that criticism of the Liberian government or indeed even press coverage of that criticism will not be tolerated.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Liberia, page 724:c]

MOROCCO

a. Morocco invades islet off Spain: Spanish and Moroccan officials tried to play down tensions, July 13, after Morocco set up a military post on a disputed islet near Spain's enclave of Ceuta.

While Madrid has sent gunboats, submarines and attack helicopters to protect territory it controls along Morocco's Mediterranean coast, Spain's new foreign minister Ana Palacio tried to calm the situation.

"One cannot talk about an invasion here, and it does not help anyone to let things get out of hand," she told newspaper ABC in an interview published, July 13.

While Madrid has so far fallen short of claiming full sovereignty over the rocky, uninhabited island of Perejil, Palacio reiterated the Spanish government's demands for "a return to the status quo" before the occupation of the island by around a dozen Moroccan soliders.

The sighting of a Moroccan patrol boat close to other Spanish-controlled islands, July 12, has upped the stakes in a simmering bilateral row.

Madrid and Rabat are already at odds over illegal immigration, drug trafficking across the Straits of Gibraltar as well as fishing rights.

Moroccan communications minister Mohamed Achaari, in an interview with *El Pais* newspaper, said the Spanish government had "exaggerated" its reaction to the incident.

"There is no reason to create a drama," he said.

"Morocco wants to use an island under its sovereignty in a different manner to fight more efficiently against the trafficking of immigrants and terrorism".

The only visitors to the island, which lies some 200 metres off the Moroccan coast, were local herdsmen who used it to graze their goats, he said.

"We have taken this initiative to improve the fight against the common cause, which interests not only Morocco but Spain as well: to slow maritime emigration and fight terrorist activities in the Straits," he told the newspaper.

Achaari emphasised that Morocco had no interest in other Spanish-controlled territories along its coast, such as the Chafarinas islands. Madrid has said the move—dubbed an invasion by the Spanish media—contravenes a 1991 treaty on cooperation and friendship. It received swift backing from its European partners, who condemned Moroccan landing on Perejil as a violation of Spanish territory and urged a quick solution.

b. Minister warns Muslim clerics: Morocco's Islamic affairs minister has warned in a magazine interview that Muslim clerics who incite anti-American or anti-Semitic hatred in the country's mosques will be punished.

"The mosque is a sacred place, a place of worship that must be preserved from political quarrels," said Abdelkhebir M'Daghri Aloui in *Marco Hebdo International*.

In a rare interview, the influential minister said he met the US ambassador, Margaret Tutwiler, earlier to discuss increasingly vehement speeches by Muslim clerics denouncing the United States in the run-up to legislative elections, it was reported, July 3.

M'Daghri Aloui, who answers directly to King Mohammed, VI, predicted there "won't be any landslide Islamic victory" when Moroccans head to the polls on Sept 27.

"I have formally forbidden clerics of supporting the electoral programme of any (political) party", he said in the interview.

"Any cleric who does will be immediately punished".

M'Daghri Aloui also praised his country's security services for dismantling "an active Al-Qaeda cell".

c. Royals break tradition: King Mohammed VI and his new bride—a 24-year-old commoner and computer engineer—began publicly celebrating their marriage, July 12.

The festivities showed the young King's desire to modernise Morocco's monarchy.

About 1,500 people were on the official guest list, including the former US President, Bill Clinton, and his daughter, Chelsea. The celebration, initially scheduled in April, was postponed because of West Asia tensions. Toned down, it still included street parties and public group marriages. In another highlight, the auburn-haired bride, Salma Bennani, would be presented to the guests, wearing her finest gown.

(SOURCE: *Telegraph*, Calcutta and *Hindu*, Madras)

[Background Info. Morocco, page 689:a]

MOZAMBIQUE

a. Agreements signed with FAO: The Mozambican government and the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), July 8, signed two agreements in Maputo on improving food security and the country's early warning system.

The agreements, valued together at over eight million US dollars, were signed by agriculture minister Helder Muteia and by the FAO representative in Mozambique, Peter Vantor.

The first agreement seeks to improve household food security and nutritional status in the central province of Manica. The project will be carried out over four years and is budgeted at 5.12 million dollars.

Of this sum, 4.3 million dollars will come from Belgium, 720,000 from FAO, while the Mozambican government will contribute the equivalent of 100,000 dollars.

According to Muteia, the project is intended to assist peasant households affected by food insecurity, by providing them with seeds, improving their diet, and providing training in the construction of improved barns, to reduce post-harvest losses.

Agreements on agricultural development signed with Italy: The Mozambican and Italian governments signed two agreements on agricultural development in Maputo, July 11, budgeted at about ten million US dollars.

Signing the agreements were Mozambican foreign minister Leonardo Simao, and the Italian deputy foreign minister, Alfredo Mantica.

A million dollars of the Italian aid is intended for Mozambique's National Agricultural Development Programme (PROA-GRI), while nine million is earmarked for the Integrated Agricultural Project (PIDA).

These agreements honour an Italian promise of March 2001 to support Mozambican agriculture.

Speaking after the signing ceremony, Simao praised the Italian government for its total cancellation of Mozambique's bilateral debt in June.

He pledged that the money that would have gone on servicing the debt, will now be channelled to the health and education services, and to rural development.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

NIGERIA

a. Nude protest over oil: Unarmed village women holding 700 petroleum workers inside a southeast Nigeria oil terminal let 200 of them go, July 14, but threatened to protest nude if the others tried to leave.

"Our weapon is our nakedness," said Helen Odeworitse for the villagers in the extraordinary week-old protest for jobs, electricity and development in Nigeria's oil-rich Niger Delta.

About 600 women from two nearby communities are holding ChevronTexaco's giant Escravos terminal. They range in age from 30 to 90—with the core group being married women aged 40 or older.

The women want the oil giant to hire their sons and use some of the region's oil riches to develop thier remote and run-down villages, most of which lack even electricity.

The people in the Niger Delta are among the poorest in Nigeria, despite living on the oil-rich land.

ChevronTexaco officials have refused to identify the trapped workers, but an employee said, July 10, they included Americans, Britons and Canadians as well as Nigerians.

Anino Olowu, 55, leader of the women's negotiating team, said it was not clear when talks would resume.

ChevronTexaco's top negotiator said he needed to consult higher-ups first.

(SOURCE: *Hindustan Times*, New Delhi)

RWANDA

a. Genocide suspect acquitted by Arusha tribunal: The appeals chamber of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) has unanimously confirmed the judgement of trial chamber I which had acquitted Ignace Bagilishema, former bourgmestre (mayor) of Mabanza, near Kibuye.

Announcing its decision at a hearing in Arusha recently, the president of the appeals chamber, Judge Claude Jorda, said that the chamber unanimously rejected all of the arguments submitted by the prosecutor and ordered Bagilishema's immediate release.

The detailed reasons for the decision would be given in writing later, it was reported, July 15.

Bagilishema's counsel, Mantre Francois Roux of the Montpellier Bar, welcomed the decision. He said it was an important day for Bagilishema and his family; it was an important day for international criminal law.

Only two days after the entry into force of the Statute of the International Criminal Court, the appeals chamber had demon-

strated that it was for judges, in their full independence to decide who was guilty and who was innocent. He added that it was an important day for Rwanda also and a step in the process of reconciliation to which the work of the ICTR contributed.

b. ICTR judges reject prosecutor's motion to sue magazine: Judges at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) have rejected a prosecution motion that sought to sue *Diplomatie Judiciaire*, a French journal on international justice issues, for revealing the identity of a potential protected witness.

In their ruling dated July 5, the judges stated that the prosecution failed to establish "that 'information published was under the witness protection procedures'."

On April 26, the online magazine published an article titled 'The Karangwa Trap' quoting Pierre-Claver Karangwa, a former ICTR defence investigator, who was listed as a potential witness for the prosecution in the so-called "Military Trial." The Military trial, of four former Rwandan Army officers will resume in September.

ICTR registrar Adama Dieng of Senegal terminated Karangwa's contract as defence investigator in February 2002, for his alleged involvement in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.

[Background Info. Rwanda, page 775:a]

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SOMALIA

a. Over 20 killed in fresh fighting in Baidoa: Fresh fighting erupted in the town of Baidoa, July 4, in which at least 20 people were killed, local sources said.

The fighting between two factions of the Rahanweyn Resistance Army (RRA), which controls much of the Bay and Bakol regions of southwestern Somalia, started at 09:00 a.m. local time (06:00 GMT) "and is still continuing", the sources said.

It follows two days of relative calm after clashes, July 1, in which seven people died. The fighting is pitting forces loyal to the chairman of the RRA, Hasan Muhammad Nur Shatigadud, against those loyal to his two deputies, Shaykh Adan Madobe and Muhammad Ibrahim Habsade.

According to the sources in Baidoa, the renewed fighting was not unexpected because there had already been a number of skirmishes between the two sides in the outlying areas of Bay Region.

Shatigadud loyalists reportedly captured the town of Buur Hakaba from the Madobe-Habsade alliance, July 3, while a militia loyal to Adan Madobe and Habsade raided an RRA base in Wajid, 90 km northwest of Baidoa and made off with 11 technicals [battlewagons] and "a huge amount of ammunition".

[Background Info. Somalia, page 765:a]

b. Poachers kill elephants: Heavily armed Somali poachers killed two elephants and at least

six ostriches in the past week in Ijara district's Boni Forest, it was reported, July 5.

The local administration fears that the poachers, estimated to number 15, are on their way to Tsavo Game Reserve in search of wildlife.

According to Ijara district commissioner Abdi Hassan, there is a ready market in Somalia for ivory and ostrich fat, which is believed to cure AIDS and diabetes.

He said insecurity in the area was on the rise due to lack of patrols by Kenya Wildlife Service rangers.

On July 4, the DC led a security team on a fact finding mission in the forest. He was expected to visit the remote Galmagalla area, 100km east of Masalani, the district headquarters, where the killings are said to have occurred.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SOUTH AFRICA

a. AIDS drug ruling humiliates Mbeki: The South African government lost its fight, July 5, to stop anti-AIDS drugs being distributed to all HIV-positive pregnant women.

In what is widely seen as a humiliation for President Mbeki's ruling African National Congress, the country's highest court ruled the government's policy to be a violation of the Constitution.

The Constitutional Court ordered the government to provide the anti-AIDS drug, Nevirapine, at all public hospitals free of charge with immediate effect.

The judgment brings to an end a bewildering saga initiated two years ago by Mbeki when he first provoked an international outcry by challenging the orthodox scientific consensus that the human immuno-deficiency virus (HIV) was the sole cause of acquired immuno-deficiency syndrome or AIDS.

Mbeki accused Western drug companies of seeking to exploit the spread of the disease by charging excessive prices for anti-AIDS drugs. He also insisted that the drugs were toxic, and more lethal than the disease they were supposed to cure.

The judgment was greeted with spontaneous applause by hundreds of AIDS activists who had gathered outside the Constitutional Court in Johannesburg to hear the long-awaited ruling by South Africa's 11 leading judges.

"This is a judgment that saves lives," said Geoff Budlender, senior counsel for the Treatment Action Campaign, the AIDS-treatment lobby that initiated the legal proceedings against the government.

"It's a victory for pregnant women with HIV, and it's a victory for the Constitution", he said.

Delivering his landmark judgment, Chief Justice Arthur Chaskalson said the government's attempt to restrict the drug to 18 pilot sites fell short of its clear constitutional obligation to provide infected mothers with the best treatment available.

"Government is ordered without delay to remove the restrictions that prevent Nevirapine from being made available for the purposes of reducing the risk of mother-to-child

transmission of HIV at public hospitals and clinics that are not research and training sites," said the Chief Justice.

Although Mbeki's government has recently tried to retreat from its controversial position on HIV-AIDS, it has refused to make Nevirapine available at all public hospitals and clinics until its tests at 18 pilot sites have been completed.

Studies have shown that a single dose of Nevirapine given to mother and child can reduce the transmission of the virus by up to 50 per cent. The drug is recommended by the World Health Organisation and has few side effects. But the government insisted that it must complete its own tests first.

The government also maintained that because of the high incidence of mother-to-child transmission, estimated to be around 70,000 new cases a year, it lacked the financial resources needed to make the drug more widely available. But Boehringer Ingelheim, the German company that manufactures Nevirapine, offered to provide the drug free.

[Background Info. South Africa, page 729:a]

b. Case against Winnie postponed: A court case against Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, the ex-wife of the former South African President Nelson Mandela was postponed, July 8, after her lawyers requested more information on the state's case against her.

Ms Madikizela-Mandela, who separated from Mandela in 1996, is facing 85 charges—60 of fraud and 25 of theft—of around one million rands after being arrested in October 2001.

The charges concern an alleged scam over the use of her signature to obtain bank loans for people claimed fraudulently to be employees of the African National Congress (ANC) women's league, which she heads.

The magistrate granted her lawyer's request to give the grounds on which it accused her of colluding with her co-defendant, broker Addy Moolman.

Investigators said she had made deposits totalling more than 550,000 rand into personal banks accounts—now frozen—since January 2001. State prosecutors told the magistrate the request for the details was made verbally only 30 minutes before the start of the trial.

[Background Info. South Africa, page 742:b]

c. UNPP chief cautions African leaders: African leaders meeting in South Africa have been warned to be cautious about the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NePAD) and protect the continent from another colonialism.

The Niger State chairman of United Nigeria People's Party (UNPP), Alhaji Jibrin Bale-Jos gave the warning at an interview with *Thisday* in Minna.

The UNPP chairman said the need to sound the warning came as a result of the double standard of the initiator of the project, adding that it could be a "Western economy action plan to colonise Africa again."

Bale-Jos said NePAD was never an African initiative, but another blueprint by the Western colonialists to subject black race to slavery.

(SOURCE: *Times*, London, *Hindu*, Madras and *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

SUDAN

a. 30 Kony rebels killed in fighting: Thirty Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels were killed, July 14, during a fierce battle with the Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF) at Agoro Trading Centre in Lamwo county, Kitgum district.

The battle took place at dawn when about 400 rebels attacked a UPDF military base at Agoro.

The UPDF 4th division spokesman, Lt Paddy Ankunda, said he did not have details about the battle but said it was a great success for the UPDF. Local security sources said a UPDF Major and some soldiers were killed in the battle.

The 4th Division commander was not available for comment as he was locked up in Gulu barracks.

[Background Info. Sudan, page 766:a]

b. Annan discusses peace: UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, July 11, concluded a two-day visit to Khartoum, during which he discussed humanitarian access and the ongoing peace process with the Sudanese government and major aid agencies.

"I come at a time when the peace process has been re-energised, and we see some good signs," Annan said.

Aid agencies have expressed hopes that Annan's visit would improve their access to conflict-affected populations in south Sudan. Repeated denials of humanitarian access by the Sudanese government and an escalation of the conflict in several areas of south Sudan have renewed concerns about the humanitarian situation of up to 1.7 million people.

Asked whether he was concerned about government flight bans in the south, Annan said the UN was always "extremely disturbed if we do not have free and unfettered access to those in need". He also expressed confidence that the Sudanese government would "share my concern that we do not want to see anyone in need deprived" of assistance.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SWAZILAND

a. Unions demand political reforms: Swazi labour leaders plan to draw world's attention to their demands for political reform in Swaziland at the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions meeting in Durban, South Africa.

The Swaziland Federation of Trade unions has already asked the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to investigate alleged human rights abuses in the country, it was reported, July 2.

It is the latest move by Swaziland's labour unions in a campaign to focus international attention on the kingdom.

"First at the convention of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in Geneva in June, and recently at the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions in Durban, South Africa, the unionists have brought to the attention of the world community the need for political reform in Swaziland," the president of the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU), Africa Magongo, said. Although political parties are banned in Swaziland, unions can still operate in the open and this has provided one of the last outlets for political expression.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

Background Info. Swaziland, page 766:a]

TOGO

a. Prime Minister fails to show up at ceremony: The internal political crisis looming over Togo's governing party took a turn for the worse when the dismissed Prime Minister failed to show up for an official hand-over ceremony to his successor in Lome, June 29.

In Togo the political tradition is that every out-going Prime Minister must show up at an official hand-over ceremony as a symbolic gesture of good-will and continuity of the State, irrespective of the unpalatable circumstances under which a predecessor leaves office.

Impatient political watchers in Lome expressed disappointment as out-going Prime Minister Messan Agbeyome Kodjo, who was sacked from office by President Gnassingbe Eyadema, June 17, failed to turn up in Lome to handover departure notes to his successor Kofi Sama. The official ceremony turned awry when after a long wait a very calm but visibly disappointed Kofi Sama, in his three-piece blue suit had no other choice than to undergo a strange form of official ritual in which he had to hand over administrative power to himself after inspecting a guard of honour formed by a detachment of the paramilitary gendarmerie in Lome.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

TUNISIA

a. Concern over health of Radhia Nasraoui: The World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) and the Association for the Victims of Repression in Exile (AVRE), have expressed concern over the health of Mrs Radhia Nasraoui who went on a hunger strike from June 26 in Tunis.

These organisations have sent two representatives, including doctor, to visit her.

(See Analysis, page 791)

AVRE's doctor said after examining Mrs Nasraoui that the hunger strike may cause considerable damage to her health. Moreover, the psychological state of her two daughters, Ousama (13 years of age) and Sarra (3 years of age), is also a major concern.

Radhia Nasraoui, who is the wife of opposition leader Hamma Hammami and an indefatigable warrior in favour of human rights, began a hunger strike in order to demand her husband's unconditional release, after he had been sentenced to more than three years imprisonment for his political views.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Tunisia, page 778:a]

ZAMBIA

a. Chiluba fears consequences of lifting immunity: Former President Frederick Chiluba, July 14, expressed fears that he might be harmed after lifting of his immunity.

Briefing the press in response to several charges of corruption and plunder of national resources levelled against him by President Levy Mwanawasa, Chiluba described the charges as "a mere figment of imagination and have no basis in fact or substance".

"That is why I feel saddened that President Mwanawasa went to Parliament, July 11, with the express intention of inciting and inflaming the honourable members to remove my immunity. He presented to the House a travesty of charges to justify this very serious and onerous decision," Chiluba said.

"I address you today because I feel aggrieved by the allegations levelled against me and the manner in which they have been handled. The President, acted as prosecutor, jury and judge to determine that a prima-facie case has been established against me meriting the loss of my immunity without my being heard."

b. Justice Ngulube resigns to face probe: Chief Justice Matthew Ngulube has resigned his position following mounting pressure from members of the public to resign, it was reported, July 8.

President Levy Mwanawasa's aide for press and public relations Arthur Yoyo, July 7, announced that the President had since accepted Justice Ngulube's resignation which is effective July 31.

"Chief Justice Ngulube had written to the President offering his resignation with effect from July 31, to enable him to complete writing some outstanding judgments," Yoyo said.

Justice Ngulube went on leave in June pending retirement following revelations that he was bribed by former President Frederick Chiluba in cash payments amounting to over US \$ 168,000.

(SOURCE: *Times of Zambia*, Lusaka)

ZIMBABWE

a. US judgment illegal: Zimbabwe does not recognise the judgments of foreign courts, which arrogate to themselves jurisdiction over matters not concerning them, the Zimbabwe embassy in Washington said, July 12.

The embassy was commenting on the judgment by a New York court on a case brought by Elliot Pfebve, the MDC losing candidate for Bindura in the June 2000 Parliamentary election and other party activists against President Mugabe and Zanu-PF.

The MDC activists had sued President Mugabe under a 21-year-old law which gives United States courts jurisdiction in cases where international law has been violated.

A judge dismissed the case against the Zimbabwe government and President Mugabe on premises of diplomatic immunity, but New York judge James Francis ruled against the President.

Francis awarded US\$73 million (Z\$4.02 billion) in damages to the alleged victims of political violence, most of whom are MDC activists tortured or killed by ruling party supporters.

b. Journalist acquitted, expelled: An American journalist charged with publishing a false story under Zimbabwe's draconian new media laws was found not guilty, July 15, but was immediately ordered to leave the country.

Judge Godfrey Macheyo acquitted Andrew Meldrum, saying prosecutors failed to refute the claim that he (Meldrum) took all reasonable steps to verify his story on the killing of an opposition supporter by ruling party militants.

The report was later proved false. Had he been found guilty, Meldrum, a 50-year-old correspondent for Britain's *Guardian* newspaper, could have been jailed for up to two years.

"I feel I am vindicated. I am delighted," said Meldrum.

Immediately after the acquittal, immigration officials ordered Meldrum, a permanent resident who has lived in Zimbabwe since 1981, to leave country within 24 hours.

[Background Info. Zimbabwe, page 768:c]

c. Aid group fires officials: A Catholic aid group in Zimbabwe said, July 11, it had fired two top officials running a refugee camp after allegations they sexually abused some of the refugees.

Michael Graglia, acting local director of the International Catholic Migration Commission, said the two Zimbabweans had been "suspended and dismissed" following a detailed investigation conducted by the commission's Geneva-based head, Dale Buscher.

Buscher's report said boys as young as 15 had been asked to submit to sex with the camp's director in return for education scholarships. A second official at the Tangogara camp, 400 km southeast of Harare, was dismissed and his two wives were dismissed from their jobs as temporary teachers.

There was also evidence of harassment of women and girls between the age of 15 and 35, though no firm testimony of rape. Victims had not come forward with accusations, according to Buscher's report. The camp holds about 500 refugees from Somalia, Sudan, Rwanda, Afghanistan and several West African countries.

"A vacuum of leadership created conditions for individuals to act with impunity", the report said.

Buscher said the aid group "deeply regrets the harm done" and had taken measures to "ensure better protection".

(SOURCE: *Independent*, Harare and *Hindu*, Madras)

REGIONAL

a. African Union, Peace and Security Council launched: Africa launched a continent-wide union in Durban, July 9, to try to end poverty and war, pledging a home-grown programme of clean government to end human rights abuses and attract foreign investment.

"We are saying we are not begging for assistance any more. It is in everyone's interest to help develop Africa," South African deputy foreign minister Aziz Pahad said of the formation of the 53-nation African Union (AU).

The first assembly of heads of state of the AU approved the establishment of a Peace and Security Council that will have powers to deal with conflict and security issues under AU auspices.

The leaders attending a summit in the South African resort city of Durban later moved to a sports stadium to stage the public launch of the AU with marching bands, tribal dancers and a helicopter flypast.

The AU, which replaces the ineffectual Organisation of African Unity (OAU), aims to replicate the European Union in fostering prosperity and democracy through social, economic and regional integration.

Unlike the OAU, the AU will have the right to intervene in member states in case of war crimes and genocide.

Despite progress in ending long wars in Sierra Leone and Angola, belligerents from Liberia to Sudan, including both Congos and the Great Lakes region, are still playing havoc.

Diplomats and some delegates said prospects for promoting democracy appeared uncertain at best as some African leaders came to power through unconstitutional means and many remained reluctant to embrace accountable and transparent government.

"The major problem of the OAU has always been African solidarity—a club of brother leaders who stand together and who do not condemn, certainly not publicly," said South African political analysts Jakkie Cilliers.

"And this is also evident here, because what the leaders are doing is that they are trying to launch a new structure and for that they need solidarity, they need one another, so they are trying to avoid issues that are controversial—Zimbabwe, for example".

President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, the summit host and one of three leaders who had Zimbabwe suspended from the Commonwealth after controversial elections, made no mention of Zimbabwe when he referred to successful recent African elections during ceremonies marking the demise of the OAU.

As if to underline concerns in the West that African leaders privately hold widely divergent ambitions for the AU, Libya, a key backer of the project, lodged last-minute questions about the terms of the venture on the eve of its launch.

Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi, July 8, proposed amendments to the union's founding charter that would create a single African country with a single army—a long-held dream of Gaddafi's that has virtually no support in any member state.

Delegates said that after a long argument that delayed a late banquet by three hours, keeping business magnates and haute couture-clad First Ladies pacing impatiently, the leaders decided the founding document of the union meant the

amendments could not be addressed at such short notice. Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo said that despite doubts about the willingness of some leaders to embrace democracy, the continent was moving in the right direction.

"I would not say I am satisfied where Africa is today, I'm not even satisfied where Nigeria is politically, economically and socially. But we are on the right track, and provided we remain on that track I am satisfied," he said. "Some of us will be fast, some of us will be slow, some will even stop, but (I am satisfied) provided that when they stumble, they get up and get going again".

(SOURCE: *Deccan Herald*, Bangalore and *Hindu*, Madras)

ANALYSIS

Tunisia—where public face belies repression

The men pounced, their beefy hands grabbing, pushing, shoving. There were a dozen of them, at least, and they hurled themselves at anyone in their way. Others banged bottles on a car, menacing a group of women as they tried to flee.

The assailants didn't identify themselves, but in Tunisia, as in much of the Arab world, there was no need. It wasn't so much the clothes, which were casual, as much as it was the attitude. These men could do whatever they wanted, whenever they felt like it. They were the police.

In this case, they'd been dispatched by the government to stop a group of human rights activists from demonstrating for the release of political prisoners.

"Tunisia presents itself as a good student to the international community," said Omar Mestiri, the founder of a banned human rights monitoring group who sported a deep purple bruise under his eye after the recent fracas. "It's very progressive in economic matters, and it says it is working on human rights. That's the face of it. But on the inside, it is a police state".

Tunisia's general-turned-President, Zine el Abidine Ben Ali, promised democracy when he came to power in 1987 in a bloodless coup. He instituted the usual trappings, allowing for opposition press, freeing some political prisoners and even abolishing the post of President for life. But all it takes is a quick stroll down any street in Tunis, the capital, to experience what it's like to be followed by agents who make little attempt to stay hidden. The system is designed to intimidate—and to keep the ruling group in power.

President-for-life: In June, the President pushed through a constitutional change that will, in effect, allow him to serve as President for life. Like many regimes in the Arab world, Ben Ali's government is sitting on a volcano of popular discontent stoked by religious fervour and international events such as Palestinian intifada. Tunisians, like many Arabs in the Middle East, are also immensely frustrated with their own entrenched leadership limits on democracy and the widespread use of force and intimidation to silence political opposition.

Tunisia is a stable country in North Africa, sandwiched between two volatile and even more oppressive neighbours, Algeria and Libya. Its capital, Tunis, is a cosmopolitan city, with a European flair and majestic palm trees lining the main boulevard. Tunisia does more than 70 per cent of its trade with Western Europe, spends more than 50 per cent of its budget on social and developmental programmes and reports that 85 per cent of the population owns a home. Its streets are clean, its shops are filled, and it is eager to present itself as a modern, secular state.

The government rejects the notion that the nation is a police state, but from Tunis to the coastal resort towns of the south, many Tunisians—shopkeepers and homemakers, nurses and senior citizens—speak of a regime that relies on fear and intimidation to keep everyone, not just Islamists, in line. Speak out against the regime, and your mother might be harassed. Join a banned organization and your children might be thrown out of school. Your phone lines might be cut. Your cars stolen. Offices ransacked. Passports confiscated. Jobs taken away.

Bashir Abeid, 34, is a typical example of what happens when someone gets involved in activities the government doesn't condone. He was studying general history more than a decade ago when he became a student leader calling for better conditions for students and prisoners. Over the years, he's been arrested, held in prison and had his passport taken away, though it was returned. Worse, he says he has been repeatedly tortured, charges that have been supported by independent human rights groups. The authorities, he says, shocked him on his genitals, manacled his wrists behind his ankles and beat him while suspended from a rod. He says he was hanged from his neck, dropped in a vat of urine and kept awake for days at a time.

"I have chosen this path, and these are the consequences," he said. "It is not easy fighting a police state".

The modern state of Tunisia was fathered by Habib Bourguiba, a French-trained lawyer who led the country to independence from France in 1956. He was a dictator, but a relatively enlightened one for the region. He granted unparalleled

rights to women, including the right to vote and serve in government, to sue for divorce and to have an abortion. Polygamy, permitted in the Koran, was outlawed.

In the 1980s, the Bourguiba regime concluded that the Islamic movement Nahda had gained too much power. Motivated by the success of the Islamic revolution in Iran and financed by Persian Gulf states, Nahda, according to government officials, was planning to overthrow the regime. Islamists were rounded up en masse and thrown in prison, and the party structure was dismantled. So-called moderate regimes such as those in Egypt and Tunisia have succeeded in minimizing the influence of Islamic-based opposition groups with strict security measures.

Militant Islamic movement: In Tunisia, government critics say the iron-fisted approach has turned a moderate Islamic movement with limited support into a radical underground with widespread sympathy. They say the April suicide bombing at an ancient synagogue on the island of Djerba is a sign of such a backlash. The explosion left at least 16 dead and has been linked to Osama Bin Laden's Al-Qaeda network.

"The lack of democracy, the lack of a political process and the lack of pluralistic society brings Islamists together and will make all or most of the opposition go toward the Islamists," said Mokhtar Yehyaoui, a Tunisian magistrate who was thrown off the bench when he appealed to the President for judicial independence in 2001.

"Religion is the only tool left that will integrate society together. It is this emptiness that makes everyone turn to Islam as the last resort".

Radiha Nasraoui, a prominent human rights lawyer and wife of a now-imprisoned opposition leader, belongs to a political class that initially supported the crackdown on the Islamists. These were people who wanted Western-style democracy, who looked to Europe as a model not to Tunisia's Arab neighbours. The thought of an Iranian-style republic terrified them.

Three years after Ben Ali came to power, Nasraoui defended an opposition political leader who has been charged with a crime. When she entered the courtroom, she was arrested and held in prison for many days.

"Bourguiba was a dictator," she said recently, "but he never arrested a lawyer". Sihem Ben Sedrine, another activist who has been beaten, harassed and jailed for her human rights work, said: "What we realized was he was not just crushing the Islamists. He was crushing democracy and civil society too".

Today, Ben Sedrine, Nasraoui and others of their political leaning find themselves pressing for Islamists to be allowed to join the political process and for all of the approximately 1,000 political prisoners held by the state—the majority of whom are Islamists—to be granted amnesty. They may not support the Islamists' agenda, but they support their right to pursue that

agenda. Fifteen years after the coup, Ben Ali is still in power. The Constitution, however, permitted only three five-year terms in office. Ben Ali and his ruling Constitutional Democratic Rally party had other ideas, and he presented the country with a referendum. It would change the Constitution to allow the 65-year-old President to run again in 2004 and in 2009.

Nasraoui and her colleagues in the democracy movement wanted to discuss the referendum, so they gathered two days before the May 26 vote in a tiny two-room office on the second floor of a Tunis walk-up. When they arrived for the meeting, a crowd of men was standing outside, bunched together in a knot, staring at everyone who went in, following some as they left.

Taha Sassi was sitting on the steps outside the office when he spotted a man in a green suit, smoking cigarette, trying to mingle with the crowd. Sassi jumped up, grabbed the man's lapels and hurled him down the stairs. He said he knew that the man was an informant. Sassi, a 27-year-old philosophy student, had already spent more than a year in jail because of informants, and he had no tolerance for them. The next day, he sat in a cafe talking about the incident when two large men entered the nearly empty restaurant and sat right beside him. The men sat for a few minutes, stared at Sassi and his friends, then left.

"You can only guess who is secret police," he said, reflecting the paranoia many Tunisians live with.

Two days after Nasraoui and her colleagues met, the polls opened for the approximately 3 million Tunisians eligible to vote on the referendum. When a government official was asked how soon vote results would be available, he said, "Officially, we expect this to pass". Although voters stood behind a black curtain to cast their ballots, secrecy was virtually impossible.

"Yes, ballots were white; "No" ballots were black and could clearly be seen through the thin envelopes. Even if attendants couldn't see, they reportedly asked for the unused ballots back.

For all the criticism, the government pointed out that this was a major step toward democracy for Tunisia because it was the first time the Constitution had been amended through a public vote. The government was eager for a large turnout, hoping to give the President some cover for staying in office, but apathy on the streets appeared widespread and polling stations in several towns were empty during the day.

One Western diplomat said he expected no more than a 50 per cent turnout. But when it was all over, the headline on the Tunisian daily *La Press* said: "A Giant Yes". The government reported 96.15 per cent voter turnout—and a whopping 99.61 per cent "yes" vote. The results, Interior Minister Hedi M'Henni said at a news conference, "surprise only those who do not know Tunisia".

—Michael Slackman in *Deccan Herald*, Bangalore, July 2002)

African Chronicle

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Vol III No. 15

BOTSWANA

a. Environmental body supports ivory trade plan: Kalahari Conservation Society, a Botswana-based environmental watchdog has backed the government's plan to sell the country's huge stockpile of elephant ivory, it was reported, July 23.

Felix Monggae, the society's official said: "We support the government view of selling its ivory to benefit the communities which are living in areas populated by elephants. We think the communities should not see the elephants as menace but rather as a resource".

He said the money raised from the sale should be ploughed back into the communities. Botswana has a population of 120,000 elephants, twice its stipulated carrying capacity and the population grows at an annual rate of 5%.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BURKINA FASO

a. 500,000 children targeted in anti-polio campaign: Burkina Faso and Niger are to conduct a joint campaign to vaccinate at least 500,000 children aged 12 months to five years, officials of the World Health Organization (WHO) said in Ouagadougou, July 29.

The first phase of the cross-border campaign, which targets 512,906 children, is due to be conducted from August 1 to August 7. The other phases will be run over four months. The children will include 218,265 from Burkina Faso and 291,641 from Niger.

The decision to administer the vaccines was taken after a child was found infected with polio in the northern Burkina Faso district of Seba, close to Niger, officials said. Investigations by WHO confirmed that the child had left Niger already infected and had visited a health centre in Burkina Faso seeking treatment.

Before that no polio case had been reported in Burkina Faso for four years. "We were in the phase in which a country that has not had a case for a given number of years can be declared free of polio," WHO's Chantal Kambire said in Ouagadougou. "But one case can jeopardise all efforts and gains made so far."

b. Thousands march against privatisation: Thousands of workers went on strike, July 18, and marched through the main streets of Ouagadougou to protest against privatisation and to press demands for salary increases.

The procession and strike were organised by the country's trade unions.

"Through this strike and procession we just want to demonstrate our dissatisfaction with the government's silence on the legitimate demands of workers," the unions' spokesman, Liliou Jean Mathias, said in Ouagadougou.

Sources said that thousands also marched in the second largest town, Bobo Dioulasso, 360 km west of Ouagadougou. Private and public sector activities were affected in both towns. All banks, for example, were closed.

The workers, who also went on strike in April and May, want a 25- per cent increase in salaries and retirement pensions, and a reduction of income taxes. These amount to 10 per cent of monthly salaries, which have hardly increased since 1994, three years after Burkina started to implement programmes prescribed by the International Monetary Fund. On the other hand, the cost of basic services have gone up: water by 114 per cent and petrol by 50 per cent.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BURUNDI

a. G-10 threatens to leave government: Burundi's Group of 10—Tutsi parties that signed the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement— has threatened to pull out of the deal unless its continued marginalisation within the transitional government ends, Bonesha FM radio reported, July 15.

Five parties of the group urged former South African President Nelson Mandela—who facilitated the peace process—to intervene, and for regional leaders to restore the rights of the G-10 in the transitional government.

Their latest protest follows the dismissal of mines minister Mathias Hitimana. Hitimana said he did not know why he was sacked.

[Background Info. Burundi, page 567:a]

b. Army kills 209 rebels: The Burundian army claimed that its forces have killed 209 rebels in fighting while suffering only seven losses in the ongoing fighting, it was reported, July 18.

Two civilians were killed in the fighting with rebels from the Forces in Defence of Democracy, which has brought in hundreds of fighters from UN refugee camps in western Tanzania since the first week of July.

Fifty seven rebels were killed near Kumoso and Buragane, located near the eastern border with Tanzania.

Another 152 rebels were killed in fierce fighting on a plateau near the central city of Gitega, 100 kilometres east of the capital, Bujumbura.

(SOURCE: *Statesman*, Calcutta and *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Burundi, page 781:a]

CONGO (DR)

a. Congo, Rwanda sign peace deal: Congolese and Rwandan officials announced they had agreed to end four years of fighting in a war that has claimed more than 2 million lives.

The peace deal announced, July 22, which must be ratified by the Presidents Joseph Kabila of Congo and Paul Kagame of Rwanda, was brokered during five days of talks mediated by South African's Deputy President Jacob Zuma.

It will commit the Congolese government to rounding up and disarming Hutu militias in territories under its control and sending them back to Rwanda, said an official.

Rwanda, which blames the militia for the 1994 Rwandan genocide, in turn agreed to subsequently withdraw its troops from Congolese soil. It remains to be seen how successful the agreement will be.

[Background Info. Congo (DR), page 782:b]

b. Mandate of UN panel on resource exploitation extended: The mandate of the United Nations expert panel investigating the exploitation of natural resources in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been extended until October 31, 2002.

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan recommended the extension to the Security Council. He said that while the panel was expected to submit a report at the conclusion of its current mandate, it needed additional time to complete its work in order to receive completed questionnaires sent to the relevant countries involved, and also to corroborate evidence.

The six-member panel's mandate was previously extended for six months in February. It issued a preliminary report in May. Prior reports were issued in November and May 2001. A number of countries have been implicated in the findings of the panel—particularly Rwanda and Uganda—since it began its work in September 2000.

A separate investigation, headed by Justice David Porter, was established in Uganda in May 2001, in response to the panel's findings.

The second UN report, published in November 2001, cleared the Ugandan government of any wrongdoing, but accused General James Kazini and several Ugandan army officers of gaining personal wealth from mining operations in the DRC.

The commission is ongoing and is scheduled to hand over its findings in August.

The Belgian Senate established a further commission of inquiry in November 2001—for an initial period of six months—to investigate the alleged involvement of Belgian and non-Belgian companies in the illegal trade of natural resources of the DRC, and to explore measures to halt such activities from fuelling war in the region.

[Background Info. Congo (DR), page 782:c]

c. UN report details killing of 183: A report by a UN expert has detailed 'massacre' of at least 183 people in Kisangani, eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.

The report said the massacre was allegedly committed by one of the main rebel groups in the country, the Rwanda-backed Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie (RCD-Goma), it was reported, July 18.

The killings started after a mutiny in Kisangani, involving troops of the RCD-Goma, the de-facto authority in eastern Congo. The group briefly occupied a local radio station and appealed to the public to expel Rwandan troops from the country.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, Madras and *East African*, Nairobi)

IVORY COAST

a. Transport strike paralyses Abidjan: Abidjan, Ivory Coast's economic capital, was paralysed, July 22, by a strike launched three days before by public transport operators in protest against the killing of a taxi driver by a policeman.

According to reports from other major towns, the strike has also been observed there.

The victim, 20-year-old Keita Kalilou, had been driving in the suburb of Yopougon, July 18, when the incident occurred. Eyewitness quoted by local dailies, including the state-owned *Fraternite Matin*, said the security officer shot Keita at close range after ordering him to stop.

Within hours of his killing, the city's two main transport unions had declared a five-day strike.

Since July 19, economic activities have been severely disrupted in Abidjan. By weekend, the strike had spread to other major urban centres such as Bouake in the centre, and Abengourou in the east. Public transport between the port city of Abidjan and the rest of the country has virtually ground to a halt.

b. Police indicted for death of Nigerian student: An Ivorian national daily *Le Patriote*, July 24, published the autopsy report of the slain Nigerian student, Opene Frank in Abidjan and indicted the country's police for his death.

The paper said, July 24, the highest authority in the field of pathology had just contradicted the preliminary report of the police on the death. The report had said that the deceased was a robbery suspect killed when his gang attacked the police.

The police which had classified the case file as "attempt on the life of a policeman," said in its report that the police was replying to an attack by suspected criminals when the Nigerian was killed as he approached them. But according to the autopsy, the bullet that killed the boy was the one he received at the back of his neck as he stooped.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

ERITREA

a. Annan calls for adjusting UNMEE mandate: UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan has called for adjusting the mandate of the UN peacekeeping mission in Eritrea and Ethiopia so that it can help in implementing the recent ruling on the border between the two countries.

In his latest report to the Security Council, Annan said the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) could help with the "expeditious and orderly" implementation of the decision, issued on April 13 by an independent Boundary Commission based in The Hague.

This would entail mine clearance, agreeing with the parties on technical modalities for transferring territorial control, and providing administrative and logistical support to the Boundary Commission.

Annan's comments were echoed by his special representative Legwaila Joseph Legwaila. "We are here on the ground and we have proven that we can do it," Legwaila told a video-linked press briefing in Asmara and Addis Ababa, July 19.

"We have the human resources to do demining, if anything we have to get money to do that and the international community seems to be very keen to finance demining for demarcation," he said.

b. Government warns of looming humanitarian crisis: The Eritrean government has warned of an unfolding humanitarian crisis due to the complete failure of rains in April-May.

An alert, issued by the Eritrean Relief and Refugee Commission (ERREC), said the country was facing an "exceptionally severe and prolonged drought" which was threatening the survival of people and animals. It said the "unprecedented" dry spell had continued into June and July - the prime planting months.

"As a result, a humanitarian emergency that will have serious consequences—unless urgent preventive measures are taken by the international community—is unfolding," the ERREC statement said, July 25. It pointed out that the 'Azmera' or spring

rains are not only important for the growth of long cycle crops, but also for the pasture that provides fodder and water for livestock.

"Now that the planting season is almost coming to an end, without farmers planting the long duration crops, Eritrea expects to reap virtually little crop harvest this agricultural year," ERREC said. "The entirety of Eritrea's farming population will thus face the threat of a serious famine disaster."

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

ETHIOPIA

a. Ethiopian Airlines to modernise fleet: Ethiopian Airlines (EAL), July 26, announced plans to modernise its fleet with 12 new state-of-the-art Boeing jets.

The move—which was agreed in a US \$480 million deal—is a setback for the European-led Airbus consortium which had been trying to woo EAL.

EAL, which employs almost 4,000 people, is to buy six "New Generation" planes for US \$480 million and lease a further six from the American airline giant.

There had been speculation that Airbus had clinched the deal, which would have ended some 35 years of EAL using Boeing airplanes. Bisrat Nigatu, the chief executive of the company, told a press conference that the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia had financed the deal.

"Both Airbus and Boeing have been campaigning hard over the last few years for this deal, with Airbus proposing its A319-100 and A330-200 airplanes," he added.

b. Ethiopia ranks 168th in human development index: Ethiopia ranked 168th in the human development index (HDI) out of the 173 countries covered in the United Nations Human Development Report (HDR), it was reported, July 26.

The theme of the 2002 report is "Deepening Democracy in a Fragmented World." HDR 2002 is about the political dimension of development, political freedom and participation as a goal or an end, and about democracy as an important means to advance social and economic progress, according to a release by the UNDP.

The HDR argues that development is ultimately a process of enlarging people's choice, not just raising national income.

The report also argues that politics matters for human development, and that countries can promote human development only when they have governance systems that are fully accountable and in which people can influence decisions that shape their lives.

c. Government urged to repeal draconian press laws: An international press freedom watchdog, July 25, called on Ethiopia to abandon new "draconian" media laws.

The New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) also urged the authorities to "stop harassing" reporters in the country and allow them more freedom to work.

It said that journalists working for private newspapers were not allowed access to the same information as journalists working for government-run publications.

The CPJ also called on the government to release three journalists who are currently jailed in Ethiopia. Thirty seven other journalists have criminal charges pending against them.

Josh Friedman, a Pulitzer prize winner for his 1985 report about the famine in Ethiopia and director of the CPJ board, urged the authorities to scrap criminal penalties for journalists.

He said that jailing journalists for getting facts wrong but not allowing those same journalists access to information was absurd.

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

[Background Info. Ethiopia, page 783:a]

GHANA

a. 4 cocoa purchasers face ban following involvement in smuggling: The chief executive (CE) of the Ghana Cocobod, Kwame Sarpong, has said that four licensing cocoa purchasing companies (lpc) operating in the western region would be banned from operating in the area.

The ban follows their involvement in smuggling of cocoa into neighbouring Ivory Coast.

Speaking at the 19th annual general meeting (AGM) of the Kuapa Kokoo Ltd (KKL), at Goaso, the chief executive disclosed that the western regional minister, Joseph Boahen Aidoo, had made a report over the illegal activities of the four LPCs in the cocoa industry.

Later in an interview, the CE declined to mention the names of the companies saying, "we shall announce their names when we finalise our decision on them."

Sarpong told Chronicle that, by October 2002 the board would fully comply with all rules and regulations governing the cocoa industry. On withdrawal of their licences, the chief executive said: "This will depend on the gravity of the offence." Sarpong appealed to all cocoa farmers, particularly those at the border towns, to help check smuggling of cocoa beans into neighbouring countries.

[Background Info. Ghana, page 435:a]

b. *Passions* editor to apologise: The Ethics Committee of the Ghana Journalists Association (GJA), July 25, asked Frederick Benti, a representative of the editor of *Passions* to withdraw forthwith copies of obscene and offensive publication of the paper.

After appearing before the committee, it was agreed that Benti should publish an apology, which must first be cleared with

the Ghana Journalists Association (GJA) Ethics Committee, twice in a prominent daily and in the next issue of *Passions*.

A GJA release issued in Accra and signed by GJA Ethics Committee chairman, Mrs Frances Ademola, requested Benti to pass on the requests and concerns of the committee to the London-based editor of the paper, Rudolf Opoku-Addo and his collaborators.

The *Passions*, a paper planned and edited in London but published in Accra by Cheetah Classics Ghana Limited, in its maiden issue, which appeared on the newsstands on July 15 contained materials which the committee found "most distasteful."

(SOURCE: *Accra Mail*, Accra)

KENYA

a. Thirteen suspended councillors reinstated amid protest: Thirteen Kitale councillors who have been under suspension have been reinstated, it was reported, July 27.

The councillors, including Mayor John Wanyonyi, have been out in the cold for nine months. Town clerk Joseph Mutua said the leaders were recalled following a directive from the local government ministry.

Mutua said a full council meeting would be convened, July 29. But traders in the town protested against the councillors' return and demanded the release of a probe report on alleged corruption in the council.

The traders threatened to boycott paying council levies if the report was not released. Their spokesman, Joseph Njoroge, said: "I will mobilise the traders to boycott paying levies if the ministry does not make the report public."

SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

LESOTHO

a. Electoral commission rigged polls, claims opposition: Lesotho High Court judge Semapo Peete, July 26, postponed hearing of an application by the opposition that accused the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) of vote-rigging.

The Basotho National Party (BNP) leader, Maj Gen Metsing Lekhanya, and all 20 members of his party in Parliament lodged an application seeking a recount of the votes.

However, counsel for the IEC asked for a postponement to give the body enough time to prepare a reply to the allegations. Granting the postponement to September 2, Peete said the allegations were serious and that justice required that the other side be heard.

In his affidavit Lekhanya alleged that the number of ballot papers printed far exceeded the number of registered voters. He also claimed that his party had traced about 637,000 papers

which "found their way illegally into the electoral system under irregular and suspicious circumstances".

The IEC, he said, "had the ability to print (ballot papers) at will in order to manipulate and engineer the outcome of the election results" in favour of the ruling Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD).

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MALAWI

a. Gaddafi promises Malawi aid: Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi has promised Malawi a new 500-bed hospital and 4,000 metric tonnes of maize to ease the country's food crisis, it was reported, July 25.

Gaddafi pledged to offer the assistance during his four-day official visit to Malawi.

The announcement to assist Malawi came after the Libyan leader visited Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital in Blantyre. He also said he would persuade Nigeria and Cuba to send physicians to beef up staff of the health care system.

He also pledged to invite Libyan companies to construct houses in Malawi's urban centres to reduce housing problems that Malawians are facing.

In a bid to help Malawi achieve food security through Agricultural development, Gaddafi pledged to ship some tractors.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Malawi, page 775:a]

MAURITANIA

a. ADB approves debt relief: The African Development Bank (ADB), July 17, approved debt relief amounting to US \$72.80 million for Mauritania.

The bank said this would reduce the annual debt service obligations to the ADB by up to 80 per cent, leaving more resources for poverty reduction.

Meanwhile, ADB's board of directors, July 17, approved a loan of about US \$21.3 million to finance an economic recovery support programme in Ivory Coast.

The programme aims to reform the macro-economic environment, revitalise agricultural sub-sectors, and create enabling conditions for private sector development with special emphasis on activities aimed at promoting private investment and improving the competitiveness of enterprises.

Its goals also include improving governance, financial management and effectiveness of public expenditure, as well as people's living conditions and their full participation in the country's development, ADB said.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MOROCCO

a. Morocco, Spain end row over island: Spain and Morocco, July 20, agreed to resolve their dispute over a small Mediterranean island.

"The Spanish government has withdrawn its forces from the Moroccan islet of Leila after contacts, crowned with success, undertaken by his majesty King Mohamed VI with the American administration", Morocco's foreign ministry said through the official news agency.

Spain's response was less florid. The two countries "have reached agreement about Perejil island that presumes the return to the status quo from before July", government spokesman Mariano Rajoy said in a one-paragraph news release.

The announcement of an agreement between the two countries came first from Washington.

"The United States welcomes the understanding reached by Morocco and Spain over the island, following consultations by the United States with each side", US secretary of state Colin Powell said.

Only July 11, about a dozen Moroccan gendarmes were deployed on the island, ostensibly to monitor drug and immigrant smuggling. Spanish commandos removed the Moroccans peacefully, July 17, leaving several dozen troops camped under the blazing sun. Spanish warships and helicopters have been patrolling the area.

Spain also stationed troops a few days ago on another usually uninhabited island, Isla De Lobos, located in the Atlantic ocean off Morocco's west coast.

The flare-up caused international concern, front-page headlines, critical comment from the Arab League and offers of mediation from the European Union and the United States.

Spanish foreign minister Ana Palacio said: "Spain has no desire to stay in Perejil. It desires to return to the status quo ante, but for that it requires a serious status quo, with guarantees," Ms Palacio said in remarks broadcast by Spanish radio, July 18.

Ms Palacio said outside mediation was not required to end the dispute. She said Spain would be satisfied with a commitment from Moroccan King Mohamed VI and a general Moroccan political will to bring an end to the crisis.

Once a withdrawal was agreed on, Ms Palacio said, Spanish and Moroccan police forces could carry out joint operations against drug trafficking and illegal immigration. Ms Palacio said Spain was willing to negotiate "about anything" except Ceuta and Melilla, two Spanish autonomous cities on the North African coast. Morocco has in the past indicated that it wants to negotiate on transferring the cities to its rule.

(SOURCE: *Asian Age*, New Delhi)

[Background Info. Morocco, page 785:a]

MOZAMBIQUE

a. President Chissano meets King Mswati of Swaziland to combat sugar smuggling: Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano, July 26, met King Mswati III of Swaziland and discussed measures to curb sugar smuggling into Mozambique.

Mozambique's own sugar industry is under threat from illegal imports from Zimbabwe, Swaziland and Malawi.

At a joint press conference in Mbabane, capital of Swaziland, July 26, Chissano stressed that cooperation in border security must also include the fight against contraband. Chissano called for respect for the SADC (Southern African Development Community) trade protocol, which, in his view, included the defence of legal trade by combatting the illegal variety. He pointed out that contraband can ruin the Mozambican domestic market by undercutting domestic prices.

Mswati said that some measures are under way to reorganise the Swazi sugar industry to respond to the demands of the regional sugar market.

b. Japanese aid for rural water project: The Japanese government is to grant Mozambique 3.5 million US dollars to finance the third phase of the rural water supply project for the central province of Zambezia.

The agreement was signed in Maputo, July 24, by foreign minister Leonardo Simao and Japanese ambassador Yoshiro Nose. The money is to be used to drill a further 150 boreholes in the northern districts of Zambezia. Japan is also providing the two drilling machines that will be used in this work.

Japan has already provided 15.8 million dollars to improve the supply of clean drinking water in Zambezia. Part of this money was used to train local staff to ensure that the boreholes will not fall into disrepair but will be maintained properly, on a sustainable basis, by the beneficiary communities. A second agreement signed between the two governments concerns the placing in Mozambique of Japanese volunteers for overseas cooperation.

c. Sena Railway to be revived: Mozambique has decided to revive the 600-kilometre-long Sena Railway that was once the country's lifeline for producers and traders.

In July, transport and communications minister Tomaz Salamao announced that six international consortia are bidding to work on the line, and the winners will be chosen at the end of the year. Work could start 2003.

The line, which links Malawi, Zambia and Mozambique's mineral-rich heartland with its international port of Beira, was closed in 1983 at the height of the 16-year civil war.

Most blame its destruction on former rebel fighters of Renamo—now turned opposition party—who littered the trade route with landmines.

The government's decision to rebuild the railway line came after a government report concluded that the US\$350 million project will give Mozambique a much-needed economic boost. It will help develop the economically poor but resource-rich provinces of Sofala, Tete and Zambezia.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg and *East African* Nairobi)

NAMIBIA

a. Nujoma sceptical about NePAD: President Sam Nujoma has expressed skepticism about the New Partnership for African Development (NePAD), claiming its demands for good governance and democracy are attempts by former colonisers to maintain control over the continent.

Nujoma was addressing Swapo elders in Windhoek, July 25. While the President hailed new efforts to forge African unity he warned against "succumbing to foreign ideologies and influences" through structures such as NePAD.

"As we hear that any government that wants assistance must have so-called good governance, democracy and human rights. These people cannot teach us about human rights and good governance. They enslaved our people. They colonised us," Nujoma said, departing from his prepared speech.

The President was speaking to the Swapo Elders Council Congress, the third of its kind since the old-timers' wing of the ruling party was set up more than 30 years ago.

b. Former minister arrested: Former deputy minister Walter Kemba was arrested, July 23, in connection with allegations that he stole a car which was to be donated to a traditional leader.

The alleged theft took place in 1998, while Kemba was still a deputy minister. At the time both he and former fisheries permanent secretary Axel Ishitile were involved in arranging the donation of a vehicle to Sambyu traditional leader Angelina Malumbo Libebe, sources said.

The vehicle was financed by Walvis Bay businessman Ivo de Gouveia, who is involved in the fishing industry. Kemba (47), a former trade unionist before he served as deputy minister of labour in the late 1990s, said, July 23, he was "puzzled" by the charges. He was speaking after he appeared in the Windhoek magistrate's court on charges of fraud and theft of a motor vehicle. Kemba said that he did not know what the case against him was about, and said he was yet to be informed about the detail of the charges.

c. Hungry UNITA soldiers surrendering in Namibia: Hungry UNITA soldiers and their families who have crossed into Namibia are being transported back across the border to quartering areas in southern Angola by the Namibian Defence Force (NDF), it was reported, July 25.

A senior NDF officer at the border said that many of the soldiers and their dependants were sick and malnourished. "We assist them by giving them whatever we have from our rations, we don't have anything special for them," he said. "Hunger and malnutrition is very much the main problem [among the new arrivals]."

The officer said that at a rough estimate, 400 UNITA soldiers and their families had presented themselves to the NDF over the past month and were trucked to the nearest quartering centre, 150 km inside Angola.

"They don't hide, they come [across the border] openly with their families," he said. The NDF, July 23, transported 39 people into Angola to be handed over to the authorities where they should be able to receive relief aid. The officer said that as a security precaution, the former UNITA fighters' weapons are trucked separately.

An official in the ministry of defence said that Namibia, as a neighbour and close ally of Angola, was bound to help with its quartering and demobilisation process following the April 4 ceasefire that ended Angola's long civil war. "We don't turn them [UNITA] away, we don't handle them badly. It's humanitarian assistance," he said.

(SOURCE: *Namibian*, Windhoek)

NIGERIA

a. Women 'win' battle against oil giant: Hundreds of women abandoned ChevronTexaco's main oil terminal, July 18, ending a peaceful 10-day protest against the oil giant, after it pledged to build modern towns out of poor villages.

"I give one piece of advice to all women in all countries: they shouldn't let any company cheat them," said Anunu Uwawah, a leader of the protest at the southeastern Nigerian Escravos terminal. Uwawah and her comrades were ferried back to their villages in ChevronTexaco boats, July 18, along the way passing hundreds of oil workers returning to the facility. "Chevron has shown a lot of restraint, commitment to good neighbourliness, peace and dialogue," said its spokesman. "I would like to believe this is the hallmark of Chevron negotiations, and will continue to be".

The women had trapped about 700 American, British and Nigerian workers inside the terminal. Two hundred employees were allowed to leave, July 14, and hundreds more two days later, leaving just a few dozen inside. The women kept their hold on the terminal by threatening to take off their clothes—in a last-ditch gesture to humiliate the company.

For the women, what started out as an act of desperation ended in victory. The company agreed to build schools, clinics, town halls, electricity and water systems in villages of rusty tin shacks.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, Madras)

[Background Info. Nigeria, page 786:a]

RWANDA

a. Former minister testifies in defence: Andre Ntagerura, a former Rwandan minister for transport and communication, July 17, took the stand in his own defence before judges at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR).

Ntagerura is one of the three defendants in the so-called "Cyangugu Trial." He is jointly tried with Samuel Imanishimwe, a former commander of the Cyangugu military barracks, and Emmanuel Bagambiki, a former Cyangugu governor.

All three have denied charges of genocide and crimes against humanity.

They allegedly committed the crimes in Cyangugu Province, southwestern Rwanda.

Led by Benoit Henry, his lead counsel, Ntagerura gave details on the ministerial positions he held in Rwanda between March 1981 and July 1994.

He was minister for social affairs and community development between March 1981 and January 1982; minister for higher education, scientific research and culture between January 1982 and January 1984; minister for transport and communication between January 1982 and July 1990; minister for public works, energy and water between July 1990 and April 1992; and, minister for transport and communication between April 1992 and July 1994.

[Background Info. Rwanda, page 786:a]

b. Three journalists arrested: Robert Sebufirira, editor of the privately-owned weekly *Umuseso*, and two of the paper's reporters, Elly MacDowell Kalisa and Godfrey Munyaneza, were arrested and jailed in Kigali, July 17 and July 18, after witnessing an incident of police brutality.

"Nothing appears to justify these arrests of journalists who are simply doing their job," said Reporters Without Borders secretary-general Robert Minard in a letter to Rwandan justice minister Jean de Dieu Mucyo.

"It looks like an excuse to hit once more at the newspaper and contradicts President Paul Kagame's recent statements that the country is on the road to democracy." He called for the immediate release of the journalists and the dropping of the charges against them.

The three had been chance witnesses on July 17 to police roughing up a man near a bar in the Kiyovu district of Kigali. Bystanders urged the journalists denounce the police behaviour in the paper. When police reinforcements arrived, the crowd, including the two reporters, was detained. Sebufirira was detained the next day after he had given a statement to police.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SENEGAL

a. African Union grants \$193,810 to Senegal: The Republic of Senegal is to receive a grant totalling US\$193,810.64 from the African Union special emergency assistance fund for drought and famine in Africa, for financing reforestation in the northern region of the country, it was reported, July 26.

An agreement was signed in Addis Ababa, between the acting interim chairperson of the African Union, ambassador Mohamat Habib Doutoum, and the permanent representative of the Republic of Senegal to the AU Commission, ambassador Mame Balla Sy, according to an AU press release.

Ambassador Sy on behalf of his government expressed appreciation to the interim chairperson of the African Union Commission, Amara Essy, and to the policy committee of the fund, for making the grant available for reforestation in his country, the release said.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SIERRA LEONE

a. War crimes court announced: A new court with eight judges has been set up to try cases of crimes against humanity in Sierra Leone during its 10-year-long civil war, it was reported, July 27.

The court, unlike war crimes tribunals of Yugoslavia and Rwanda will have judges and prosecutors from Sierra Leone and other countries, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said.

Yugoslavia and Rwanda tribunals have only foreign judges.

The international judges were appointed by Annan while the government named those from Sierra Leone.

The court is expected to try some 20 people, said to be ringleaders during the conflict, for crimes committed after the November 20, 1996 peace agreement between the government and the rebel Revolutionary United Front, which later collapsed.

Some 200,000 people were killed in the conflict and many more amputated or raped on suspicion of helping the enemy.

Thousands of children fought as soldiers and women were kept as sex slaves.

Annan appointed Pierre Boutet from Canada's defence department and Benjamin Mutanga Itoe, a Supreme Court Justice from Cameroon, to the Trial Chamber of the Special Court, while Bankole Thompson, a former High Court Justice from Sierra Leone, was named by the government.

Gelaga King, a former Sierra Leone Supreme Court Justice and Geoffrey Roberston, Head of the Doughty Street Chambers of the United Kingdom, were also appointed by the government

Annan and the government agreed to two alternate judges for the Special Court: Ghana's Isaac Aboagye who is serving as a High Court judge in Botswana, and Elizabeth Muyovwe, a High Court Justice from Zambia.

UK pulls out troops from Sierra Leone: British troops withdrew from Sierra Leone, July 28, after a two-year mission in the country, the ministry of defence said.

A ministry spokesman said around 200 troops had been gradually withdrawing from their operations over the past two weeks following the staging of peaceful elections.

Along with the servicemen, Britain is also withdrawing their support ship, *Sir Geraint*, which has been moored in Freetown harbour, official sources said.

(SOURCE: *Statesman*, Calcutta and *Asian Age*, New Delhi)

SOMALIA

a. Renewed fighting as Baidoa ceasefire breaks down: A ceasefire signed earlier by two warring factions of the Rahanweyn Resistance Army (RRA) in the southern town of Baidoa broke down over the weekend, a source said, July 29.

Heavy fighting resumed in Baidoa, July 27, when forces loyal to the RRA chairman, Hasan Muhammad Nur Shatigadud, attacked troops loyal to his two deputies, Shaykh Adan Madobe and Muhammad Ibrahim Habsade.

"Shatigadud forces attacked the Bonkai checkpoint north-west of the town manned by Madobe-Habsade forces, and the fighting spread from there to the rest of the town", the source said.

The fighting resumed when both sides used mortars and anti-aircraft weapons against each other, the source said.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SOUTH AFRICA

a. Mandela to fight AIDS stigma: Former President Nelson Mandela's aides said he planned to lead a group of eminent persons to fight the stigma AIDS carries in rural areas.

Nelson Mandela, Africa's revered statesman who turns 84, June 18, still keeps a hectic schedule at home and abroad that would exhaust men half his age.

"For a person of his age and status, it is remarkable. He prefers to keep busy," Jakes Gerwel, Mandela's former chief of staff who chairs the Nelson Mandela Foundation, said.

"The former South African President is planning a low-key celebration in London to mark his birthday and four years of marriage to Graca Machel, the former Mozambican First Lady.

No official events are planned for the man affectionately known by his clan name "Madiba".

Mandela, who spent 27 years in apartheid jails and personally guided his country through bloodshed and turmoil to democracy in 1994, has barely slowed down since he retired three years ago.

At the foundation's offices in Johannesburg, 20 staff members sift through a stack of up to 2,000 letters, e-mails and phone messages every week—asking Mandela to give a speech, cut a ribbon, or accept an award in person. "They can be from young children just wanting to say hello, to heads of state who want to meet him," said John Samuel, the foundation's chief executive officer.

Asked recently why he is so active in retirement, Mandela blamed his Afrikaner secretary Zelda la Grange: "She says 'You have been loafing for 27 years. Now you must work'".

The Nobel peace prize winner is feted by rock stars, kings and presidents and showered with awards—including the Presidential Medal of Freedom in June at an event he could not attend in Washington.

"You have to say 'No' so many times it can be embarrassing", Gerwel said. Irish rock star Bono had a typical reaction after meeting Mandela at his Johannesburg home in May. "That was great!" gushed the U2 frontman. "He's comedian as well as a great hero".

One of Mandela's favourite jokes pokes fun at his own death—something South Africans would prefer not to ponder—and also underscores his staunch loyalty to the African National Congress (ANC).

"When I die, I will go to the nearest ANC branch and renew my membership," says Mandela, whose doctors say he is remarkably fit for a man of his age who fought off cancer in June.

An amateur boxer in his younger days, Mandela still exercises regularly, although a bad knee and hip makes walking more difficult these days.

"He gets more rest and we try to build in time for writing", Gerwel said. Every few months, Mandela retreats to Mozambique's capital Maputo or a game farm in South Africa to work on his follow-up to *Long Walk to Freedom*, the bestseller on his life. Mandela still preaches reconciliation in a country where the scars of apartheid are raw and his successor talks to two nations, one white and rich, the other poor and black.

In March at a memorial to die-hard Afrikaners, he was the keynote speaker at a ceremony to honour an Afrikaner hero.

"That we have grave and deep differences with some of the political leaders from this community, and with the racial policies emanating from them, in no way detracts from our sense of appreciation of the role of Afrikaners in building our common and," Mandela said.

He has raised millions of dollars to build schools and clinics in South Africa's impoverished rural heartland—often by twisting the arms of wealthy corporate executives who jokingly say it is a huge price tag for a photo with Madiba.

Mandela has acted as a mediator in Burundi's civil war and played a key role in the Lockerbie bombing case, drawing controversy on both issues.

While the fighting in Burundi drags on, Mandela's efforts to have a Libyan agent—convicted for the 1988 Lockerbie bombing—serve out his sentence in Egypt or Tunisia has drawn fire from relatives of the victims.

At home, Mandela made headlines earlier when he publicly challenged the government's controversial views on HIV/AIDS, fuelling speculation of a rift between him and his successor President Thabo Mbeki.

"This perception of great tension between them makes nice copy for newspapers, but it's exaggerated," Gerwel said.

One in nine South Africans are living with HIV/AIDS—the highest number in the world—but the government has resisted providing key drugs to combat the disease.

Recently in Spain, he won a standing ovation from 15,000 delegates at the close of the world's biggest AIDS conference.

"AIDS is a war against humanity", Mandela said. "This is a war which requires total mobilization of the entire population".

Mandela said recently that Egypt and Tunisia were ready to let the Libyan agent convicted of the 1988 Lockerbie bombing serve out his sentence there.

After a meeting in London with relatives of Lockerbie victims, Mandela said they were not opposed to the idea of transferring Abdel Basset al-Megarhi so that he can finish his sentence in a Muslim country.

(SOURCE: *Telegraph*, Calcutta)

SUDAN

a. Govt signs peace pact with rebels: Opposition groups, July 21, cautiously welcomed a deal to resolve the country's long-running civil war.

The agreement, signed, July 20, in Kenya between the government and the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), resolved the major causes of the 19-year-long war and established a framework for talks to draft a final peace deal.

The most contentious issues of the war—which has left more than 2 million people dead—has been the SPLA's demands for some form of autonomy for the southern Sudanese, who are mainly animist or Christian.

The deal between the rebels and Khartoum's Islamic government includes agreement on the separation of state and religion as well as self-determination for the southern Sudanese.

A leading official from the Popular National Congress Party offered cautious praise for the deal.

Mohammed Hassan al-Amin said the party "welcomed in principle the signing...(but) issues and established facts such as Islamic law, Federal rule and unity should not be compromised".

"International sponsorship of the agreement" might also pressure the government into making a compromise, Hassan al-Amin said.

Sudan's main opposition party voiced support for the breakthrough agreement, which demonstrates the strength of Khartoum's desire to hold Sudan together by sharing power and backing away from Sudan's Islamic revolution.

"The Umma Party welcomes the agreement and all that leads to peace," the party's deputy chief, Omar Nur el-Dayem, said.

Ghazi Suleiman, a human rights activist, said the agreement was historic. He urged the government to "lift the injustice that befell the southerners from successive northern governments".

The ruling National Congress party said in a statement, "we have passed the major hurdle on the road to achieve peace".

Government said SPLA officials, July 20, said further peace talks in August in Kenya would focus on integrating rebel leaders into the national government and sharing the country's oil wealth.

They also said the Sudanese Constitution would be rewritten to ensure that *sharia*, or Islamic law, can be used in the north but will not infringe non-Muslim's rights in the south.

Under the agreement, Khartoum will have six years to prove it is serious about creating a pluralistic country in which religious difference are respected. Six years after the signing of a peace agreement, the government has agreed to hold an internationally monitored referendum to allow southerners to choose whether they want to remain as part of Sudan.

The Sudanese President, Omar el-Bashir, came to power in a 1989 coup orchestrated by Turabi, the Islamic ideologue also responsible for promoting the fundamentalist brand of Islam that became the basis of Sudanese law.

Turabi and Bashir later fell out after the President accused his one-time ally of trying to undermine his rule. Turabi has been under house arrest since early 2001. In recent years, Sudan has backed away from extremism and taken on a more moderate outlook.

Ordinary Sudanese have embraced the easing of strict Islamic dress and other social codes and exiles have begun returning home. US President George W Bush has been pressuring the warring parties to find peace through appointing a special envoy, the retired Senator John Danforth, to act as his point man on the Sudanese file.

President meets rebel leader: Sudan's President and the leader of southern rebels met for the first time, July 27, a week after the government and rebels agreed on a framework for talks to draft a final peace deal.

The meeting between the Sudanese President, Omar el-Bashir and John Garang, leader of the Nairobi-based Sudanese People's Liberation Army, was hosted by the Ugandan President, Yoweri Museveni, said Mary Karooro Okurut, a spokeswoman for Museveni.

Ms Okurut could not provide details of what the leaders discussed. The rebels said in a statement released, July 26, that Garang would endorse at the meeting the framework agreement and ask el-Bashir to leave all "essential and technical" issues to the upcoming talks.

The statement did not elaborate. Garang would also call for the participation of the National Democratic Alliance, an umbrella group of all Sudanese opposition parties, including the rebels, in the peace process, the statement said.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, Madras)

[Background Info. Sudan, page 788:b]

UGANDA

a. Government condemns LRA massacre: The government has condemned the July 24 abduction of civilians by Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels in Mucwini sub-county, Kitgum district, it was reported, July 29.

Information minister Basoga Nsadhu said such barbaric acts show that Joseph Kony's LRA has no political agenda. "It exposes his lust to kill innocent people and to destroy property," Nsadhu said in a statement.

"Such acts are not in line with the spirit of talking peace with the government." Nsadhu said government shared the suffering of the people of northern Uganda and is doing everything possible to end their misery.

SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi

ZIMBABWE

a. UK detains official: British immigration officers detained a senior Zimbabwean official, July 26, as he tried to board a flight to New York at Gatwick Airport.

Joshua Malinga, a politburo member and deputy secretary for disability in President Robert Mugabe's ruling Zanu PF Party, is one of the people subject to a European Union travel ban that was enlarged, July 22, to include 72 leading Zimbabweans.

The EU has barred them from entering the Union's 15-member states, to punish Mugabe's government for human rights abuses and economic policies that critics say are pushing the country into famine and chaos.

The list includes Cabinet ministers, politburo secretaries, deputy ministers, assistant secretaries of the politburo and Mugabe's wife Grace.

Wheel chair-bound Malinga and his disabled wife, who had been heading for a disability conference in New York, were taken to a hotel for the night to await deportation. Speaking later to BBC, Malinga insisted he believed the EU travel ban applied only to senior party members.

"I did not think that would include me," he said. "I am travelling to New York because I am a leader of Disabled People's International", he said.

"That is a worldwide movement of disabled people. I don't know what that has to do with the Zimbabwean government". But foreign office minister Baroness Amos dismissed Malinga's comment. "Malinga is a member of the Zanu-PF politburo. They are the party which claims to be in government and it is their policies which (are) ruining the country," she told the BBC.

(See Analysis, page 804)

"As a member of the politburo, he was appointed personally by Robert Mugabe", she said. "We are talking about collective responsibility".

"The travel ban was expanded on Monday (July 22) to include 72 people. These were the people who have to take responsibility for the fact that they are ruining a country, a country which a few years ago was the bread basket for Southern Africa and now can't feed its own people," she said.

The EU had first imposed its travel ban on 20 senior Zimbabwean officials, then added 52 people to the list, July 22. It imposed targeted sanction against Zimbabwe in February after Mugabe refused to let European observers monitor disputed elections that were held in March.

[Background Info. Zimbabwe, page 695:a]

b. Tsvangirai summoned by police: The leader of Zimbabwe's main opposition party was summoned to Harare's central police station, July 25, for questioning.

Morgan Tsvangirai, leader of the Movement for Democratic Change, was asked through lawyers to verify that he had advocated Mugabe's removal in a speech to a party rally in May, police said. The comments could constitute an offence of "undermining the office of the President" under a recently passed security law, which carries a maximum 20 year sentence.

Tsvangirai was questioned for two hours before being freed without charge, but was warned he may be prosecuted at a later date, said an opposition spokesman.

[Background Info. Zimbabwe, page 768:a]

c. A victory for journalists: Two independent journalists won the right, July 24, to challenge the constitutionality of a severe media law which they say stifles freedom of expression.

A Magistrate's Court Judge, Sandra Nhau, ruled "that the only reasonable thing" was to let the Supreme Court rule on the media law before the trial of the two journalists could begin.

Geoff Nyarota, editor of Zimbabwe's only independent daily newspaper *The Daily News*, and reporter, Lloyd Mudiwa, were charged under the law after the newspaper published a report that said an opposition supporter had been beheaded.

The law makes it illegal to publish inaccurate information, even if the journalist is unaware of it being false. It is part of a series of laws passed ahead of Zimbabwe's presidential elections in March.

(SOURCE: *Asian Age*, New Delhi and *Hindu*, Madras)

[Background Info. Zimbabwe, page 790:b]

REGIONAL

a. Gaddafi, Mbeki vie for leadership: Moammar Gaddafi arrived in Durban, July 8, for the birth of the African Union in an ostentatious flourish with a planeload of luxury armoured vehicles and his own elaborate security detail.

But the Libyan leader, who has never hidden his desire to lead Africa, was quickly put in his place by his South African hosts, who said they will be responsible for his security, not his coterie of bodyguards".

It was yet another victory for the South African President Thabo Mbeki, in his struggle with Gaddafi over who will lead the world's poorest continent in the beginning of the 21st Century.

Gaddafi fancies himself the father of the African Union, the new continental body that will replace the 39-year-old Organisation for African Unity at a summit of African leaders which began, July 8.

But it is Mbeki who has spearheaded efforts to ensure the new organisation promotes democracy and good governance and works to bring Africa out of poverty.

"At crux is two competing views for the continent," said political analyst Chris Landsberg. "When it comes to Africa, not only does Mbeki have a clear vision of where to take the continent, but it is one of substance, of governance and responsibility". Gaddafi, cast out as a player in West Asia, simply is looking to make his mark in Africa, analysts and some African officials said.

"He (Gaddafi) was so desperate to restore his image and find a new role, he latched onto the idea of Africa," said Landsberg, co-director of the Centre for Africa's International Relations at the University of the Witwatersrand.

"Clearly no democratic figure, he subscribes to open chequebook diplomacy". In a bid to woo African states, Gaddafi has paid \$2.2 million to cover the OAU membership dues for 11 countries.

He has also given aid to African nations, bailing out the Zimbabwean President, Robert Mugabe, when his country was suffering a severe fuel shortage.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, Madras)

[Background Info. Regional, page 790:a]

ANALYSIS

Man-made tragedy in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe ordered 2,900 commercial farmers to stop work on June 25, as the country faces its worst food shortage in 60 years. The order was the final step before the government seized the farms, including the crops in the fields, for redistribution to its black supporters.

"From (today) a farmer could be arrested for trying to feed the nation," the Commercial Farmers' Union spokeswoman Jenni Williams said. "We have 22,567 hectares (more than 56,000 acres) of wheat in the ground which will only be harvested in September /October. Who is going to look after the crop if the farmers stop working?" She said the union was considering asking the courts to stop the order. Other union sources said discussions with the government were still taking place. Many farmers vowed to ignore the order. One, asking not to be named for fear of retribution, said: "It is madness, our farms are producing wheat and other food crops while so many in this country are going hungry."

"Human rights catastrophe," John Makumbe, chairman of the Zimbabwe Crisis Committee, said. "These farm workers are real people and they are vulnerable. 'The government is taking away their livelihood and their homes, but it is not doing anything to give them an alternative'. The often violent land seizures are blamed, even by some of Mugabe's ministers, for the food shortages."

The World Food Programme estimates that nearly half the country's 12.5 million people will need food assistance in 2002. The food crisis is due to a combination of dry weather during the growing season and the disruption on the commercial farms, which are about five times more productive than small farms, the WFP said. The new order shows that Mugabe is determined to dismantle the white farming community whatever the social cost. Any of the farmers involved who continue working after the deadline may be jailed for up to two years.

Since June 2000 the government has named 5,872 mostly white-owned properties for confiscation. Livestock and irrigation and other equipment have been seized without compensation. Security checkpoints were set up in farming districts to prevent "sabotage" of the land reforms programme in an apparent effort to stop farmers removing goods and equipment from their property. The state media have accused some white farmers of adopting a "scorched earth" policy after confiscation. The farmers' union denied the accusation. The EU allocated famine aid to Zimbabwe, but accused President Mugabe's policies for aggravating the food crisis. "The private sector had a leading

role to play in bringing food to the market. The government must remove the constraints which are preventing this from happening," the EU aid commissioner, Poul Nielson, said.

Many analysts have blamed the "fast-track" programme for Zimbabwe's current food shortage and of the worst economic crisis in the 22 years since independence. The agricultural shutdown could put as many as 250,000 farm labourers out of work. Jean Simon, who owns a farm 80 miles from Harare, said: "I have 340 workers here who have over 1,000 dependents. We are being stopped from earning a living".

"This is not a money issue....when we are facing starvation, we are fighting about who should be growing food". England's foreign secretary, Jack Straw, has warned that the order for white Zimbabwean farmers to give up their land would trigger a "man-made tragedy" as the southern African country faced starvation.

Straw described the order by Mugabe as "extraordinary and reprehensible", saying it could not come at a worse time. The fast track land seizure programme saw around 2,900 of Zimbabwe's 4,000 farmers given official orders to stop working on their farms by midnight, June 25. They have just over a month to leave the land altogether. The farm seizures, dividing and redistribution to landless black Zimbabweans, comes under what is known as the "Section 8" ruling. The EU has warned the order to down tools could worsen southern Africa's already chronic food shortages. Straw said the international community was overwhelmingly opposed to President Mugabe's recent moves. He told the House of Commons: "I understand the frustration and anger felt in all quarters about what has happened in Zimbabwe—a man-made tragedy brought on by Mugabe."

"Zimbabwe's only way back from disaster is through the restoration of the rule of law, an end to political violence, an end to the intimidation and arrest of journalists, a return to democratic legitimacy and the adoption of credible economic policies".

Michael Ancram, the Conservative spokesman on foreign affairs, said the EU, the United States and African nations should form a coalition and put pressure on Zimbabwe to hold more elections. Zimbabwean agriculture ministry spokesmen said that white farmers were using the deadline to stop farming as a propaganda weapon and that they had been told years ago that they would have to halt their operations.

—Andrew Meldrum & Cris Chinaka in *Gurdian*, London, reproduced in *Deccan Herald*, Bangalore, July 4)

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ALGERIA

a. New airline to compete for Algerian skies:

A private company was given the go-ahead to operate an airline business in Algeria, it was reported, Aug 4.

Medina Air is the new airline that intends to offer passenger services along with competitors Khalifa Airways and Air Algerie. Medina's owners are now waiting from a certificate from the civil aviation administration to start operating with two large capacity aircraft already acquired.

While the entry of Medina bodes well for airline travellers, it is also source of additional tension to the airport authority, EGSA, which is facing a shortage of parking capacity.

(SOURCE: *Le Matin*, Algiers)

ANGOLA

a. Annan calls for expanded UN mandate: UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan has called for an expanded UN mandate in Angola to provide vital support to the peace process and to strengthen humanitarian assistance, it was reported, Aug 2.

In his report to the Security Council on Angola, Annan said the proposed new mission would focus its work on two broad areas. The first would cover the political, human rights and military aspects and the second the humanitarian (including mine action), economic recovery and development issues.

If authorised by the council, the new mission would be called the United Nations Mission in Angola (UNMA) and would have an initial six-month mandate from August 16, 2002 to February 16, 2003. It would be headed by a special representative of the Secretary-General who would assume the lead on the provision of UN support for the political and military functions envisaged in the first and second phases of the peace process, and help to conclude the implementation of the Lusaka Protocol. This would include the demobilisation and re-integration process for former UNITA soldiers.

The official news agency reported, Aug 1, that Angola had become a single army nation after the incorporation of UNITA soldiers into the Angolan Armed Forces (FAA) established, July 31, at Chicala locality, in eastern Moxico province. The process would continue throughout the country.

Angola faces catastrophic humanitarian crisis: Angola faces a "catastrophic humanitarian crisis" with millions displaced, a virtually non-existent health sector, and drastic food shortages, an Institute for Security Studies seminar heard, July 31.

The problem was deepened by a huge backlog in funding for humanitarian projects and a slow response to appeals for money, African security analysis programme researcher Jenny Clover said. She said about 4.5 million Angolans had been displaced over the years, with some two million still needing to be resettled. Another estimated 360,000 refugees were living in Zambia, Namibia and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Angola has a population of about 10.4 million people.

Many of those displaced were living in resettlement camps which were overcrowded, and had scant medical supplies.

The country had one of the highest poverty rates in the world. The life expectancy was 42 years -- lower than the sub-Saharan African average of 48 years, Clover said. Less than half the country's children attended primary school.

Four in five people had no access to essential drugs. Clover described the public health sector as "effectively non-existent".

Landmines serious threat to returning IDPs: An international demining agency, July 30, called on donors to coordinate their funding for mine action in Angola with their aid for other emergency activities.

The British-based Mines Advisory Group (MAG) said that as word spread across the country's 18 provinces that the war had finally ended, people had spontaneously moved back to their homes and found new areas to resettle in.

"The situation at the moment is very fluid. We are concerned about reports that groups of IDPs (internally displaced persons) are already on the move throughout the country. Some of the areas chosen for resettlement are still littered with anti-personnel landmines," MAG's Africa coordinator, David Greenhalgh, said.

Although the UN refugee agency (UNHCR) is expected to organise repatriation of Angolans from across the sub-region, already an estimated 9,000 refugees from camps in northern and western Zambia have crossed into Angola since the April 4 ceasefire. In Moxico province, probably the most heavily-mined area of Angola, MAG works closely with the Lutheran World Federation (LWF).

"Moxico has been identified for mine action due to the fact it was also one of the last areas to suffer conflict earlier in 2002. Also it has a large number of IDPs and its border towns will be points of entry for many refugees from Zambia and the Democratic Republic of Congo," Greenhalgh said.

[Background Info. Angola, page 781:a]

b. SADC grants diamond certification go-ahead: Southern African Development Community's minerals and mining ministers have declared that SADC diamond producing states are ready for international diamond certification.

Diamond producing states, non-governmental organisations, trade regulators, polishers, cutters and industry will launch the certification on November 5 in Geneva, Switzerland. The aim is to block the entry of so-called conflict diamonds into the legitimate market.

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, South Africa's minerals and energy minister and the head of the meeting called the Kimberly process said, Aug 2: "We are still on schedule for the November launch. We are confident that the African countries will be able to comply.

"What is remaining is the enforcement and putting up legislations within our individual countries," she said.

Eleven SADC mining ministers from the mining countries met for a four-day gathering in Gaborone, Aug 2, to assess the readiness of their countries to comply with the terms outlined during the Kimberly process in November 2001.

"All that this means is that resources which were plundered or unexploited because of the wars will help us. We will be able to levy taxes and collect more revenues. This is a win-win situation," she said.

Boometswe Mokgothu, Botswana's mining minister, ascribed SADC's success to the peace processes in Angola and Congo. "With the death of (Jonas) Savimbi and the signing of a peace deal between (Congo) rebel movements and Rwanda now there is a lot of calm in the region," he said.

EC to introduce diamond certification scheme: The EC has prepared draft legislation aimed at introducing an international certification system for trade in rough diamonds—known as the Kimberly process—into the euro zone.

In a statement issued, Aug 8, the EC said the purpose of the scheme was to prevent "conflict" or "blood" diamonds from fuelling armed conflicts in countries such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Angola or Sierra Leone.

"An effective ban will deprive rebel movements of significant finances and will therefore be an important contribution to peace and stability," the EC said. A further aim of the scheme was to protect the legitimate diamond industry, it added.

The EC envisaged a certification scheme, it said, which would serve as "an export- and import-control regime".

The producers of diamonds would control the production and transport of rough diamonds from mines to points of export.

Shipments would be sealed in tamper-resistant containers and a Kimberly process certificate issued for each shipment. Diamonds without the compulsory certificate would be prohibited by importing countries, added the EC.

Belgium, which handles more than 80 per cent of the world's trade in rough diamonds, has welcomed the move. A statement issued, Aug 8, by Belgian foreign trade minister Annemie Neyts said the implementation of the Kimberly process was "of the greatest importance" for her country.

(SOURCE: *Namibian*, Windhoek)

[Background Info. Angola, page 673:c]

BOTSWANA

a. Zimbabwean farmers look to Botswana: Nervous representatives of the Zimbabwe Commercial Farmers Union have been exploring opportunities to relocate in Botswana, it was reported, Aug 12.

Recently, the farmers convened an impromptu meeting with top Botswana government officials in Gaborone to discuss the issue.

Deputy permanent secretary of Agriculture Masego Mphathi confirmed, Aug 9, that they "held an exploratory meeting with 17 representatives of the farmers" about the possibility of investing in Botswana.

"They wanted large chunks of land in which they could continue with their farming activities on this side of the border. But the problem with us is that our land is already occupied, even if the owners might not be operating on it. There are a lot of people who have land in this country, but are not using it," he said.

"The problem is that farming is a land intensive thing and they are talking of serious farming. You get to a situation where one person was farming an area the size of 4000 ha and you cannot give him a smaller piece of land," he said.

"It is a pity that we do not have land. However, we have asked them to get into smart partnerships with the local farmers," Mphathi said.

b. Power deal with Namibia: Namibian and Botswanan electricity utilities, NamPower and Botswana Power Corporation, have agreed to build a cross-border supply line at a cost of R80m.

The purpose is to supply electricity to eastern Namibia, specifically the De Hoek area, and Ghanzi in north-west Botswana, it was reported, Aug 8.

Project design and planning have already begun, with the first tenders to be issued before the fourth quarter, NamPower chief technical director Imker Hoogenhout said, Aug 7.

The project presents an opportunity for SA companies that are suppliers of power generation, distribution and transmission equipment.

The 250km 132kV overhead transmission line will stretch from Omaere substation in Namibia, to Charles Hill at the Namibia- Botswana border and from there to Ghanzi. It will have an uncompensated transmission capacity of 18MVA.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BURKINA FASO

a. Journalist held: Reporters Without Borders, Aug 7, called for the immediate release of Agence France-Presse correspondent Christophe Koffi, who was arrested by four men in civilian dress and taken to a police station in Ougadoudou, where he was held.

"As far as we know, nothing justifies this journalist's detention", Reporters Without Borders secretary-general Robert Minard said in a letter to public prosecutor Abdoulaye Barry.

"Reporters Without Borders is astounded that the police have not specified any charges and is very concerned that they have acted in this fashion." The organisation asked for his immediate release and the return of the documents and computers seized by the police.

Koffi, who is the Ouagadougou correspondent of both AFP and Reporters Without Borders, was arrested at his place of work by four men, who searched his office and then his home, taking many documents as well as computers.

Without specifying any charge, they said they wanted to question him in connection with the investigation into the murder of Balla Kta on Aug 1. Kta was a former government minister in Ivory Coast who had joined the opposition and lived in Burkina Faso since March 2001 after being granted the status of political refugee.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Burkina Faso, page 374:a]

BURUNDI

a. Government officials and rebel leaders meet in Tanzania: Burundi government officials and representatives of the biggest rebel group in the country, Aug 12, began peace negotiations in Tanzania's commercial city Dar-es-Salaam.

According to Mauria Mwingira, spokesperson for Tanzanian President Benjamin Mkapa, the negotiations, chaired by South African Vice-President Jacob Zuma, are expected to continue for the next three weeks.

The meeting, Aug 12, marks the first face-to-face negotiations between the transitional government and leaders of the Forces for the Defence of Democracy (FDD), one of the rebel groups that have been fighting the government in Burundi.

Civil war erupted in Burundi in 1993 following the killing of Melchior Ndadaye, the first democratically elected President.

Since then, more than 300,000 people have been killed in the nine-year old civil war. Speaking to *Internews* from Dar-es-Salaam, Mwingira said Mkapa opened the peace talks by urging the warring parties to declare a temporary ceasefire during the period of negotiations "as a sign of goodwill."

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Burundi, page 793:a]

CAPE VERDE ISLANDS

a. Help still needed to stave off hunger: An emergency programme to help the most vulnerable of 30,000 Cape Verdeans threatened by hunger remains underfunded, the WFP said, July 31.

The UN agency, which appealed for US \$1.2 million for the programme more than a month ago, said it had received just 50 per cent of the food it required for the West African archipelago.

"Hunger is rapidly increasing amid deteriorating living conditions in Cape Verde," said Sonsoles Ruedas, WFP's representative in Praia.

WFP launched its appeal after the Cape Verde government made its first request for emergency food aid in over 20 years. Cape Verde traditionally suffers from food insecurity, only producing 10 per cent of its population's needs. However, the situation worsened in 2002 after the archipelago registered a 23 per cent drop in food production in 2001. As a result, food shortages have hit six of the country's 10 islands, in particular the two largest and most populous ones, Santiago and Santo Antao.

About 30,000 of the 400,000 Cape Verdeans are threatened by hunger. Many, mostly women, have resorted to selling sand, a practice which is environmentally unsustainable and has already seriously damaged most of the local beaches and allowed salt water to infiltrate once fertile land, WFP said.

It said its food aid targeted the most vulnerable families, including women, the handicapped and elderly people who are unable to work. WFP also warned that many families had already used up their seed reserves and had nothing left to plant.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Cape Verde Islands, page 758:a]

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

a. Coup trial postponed: The resumption of the trial of the alleged authors of the May 2001 coup d'etat has been postponed from August 12 to Aug 19 for logistical reasons, Radio Centrafrique reported, Aug 7.

Bad weather and road conditions would prevent the six jurors from reaching the Central African Republic capital, Bangui, by the preordained date, said a government press release cited by the radio. In addition two public holidays fell during the week, and would thus interrupt the trial. The press release stressed that the postponement was not to be interpreted as a way of delaying the trials, but rather as a means of guaranteeing justice.

The trial, which commenced on February 15, 2002, was interrupted on March 12, following a defence lawyers' boycott in protest against one of their colleagues being barred from appearing in court. Former President Andre Kolingba is a key suspect, and will be tried in absentia.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Central African Republic, page 734:a]

CONGO (DR)

a. US seeking 20 genocide suspects: The US government has announced that it is seeking "between 15 and 20" members of the "leadership" of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda currently presumed to be in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

"We're really looking for the leadership. The people who are key and (played a) fundamental role in fueling the conflict", the

United States Information Service (USIS) quoted the US ambassador-at-large for war crimes, Richard Prosper, as having told journalists in Washington, Aug 6.

The US earlier set up a US \$5 million reward fund for information leading to the arrest of nine former Rwandan leaders wanted by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR). The nine suspects are presumed to be in DRC.

Prosper also reiterated the US support for the expansion of the ICTR. He said that the US was ready to increase its funding of the ICTR in a project to add eighteen judges to the nine regular judges currently at the ICTR. The eighteen will form a pool from which to select judges to supplement the regular chambers.

"We in the United States are supportive of this idea and we intend to use our presence in the Security Council to see if we can move at a more expeditious pace", Prosper is quoted as having said.

An estimated one million Tutsis and ethnic Hutus were killed in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda according to an official census by the government of Rwanda.

b. A new peace agreement signed: Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) President Joseph Kabila and his Rwandan counterpart Paul Kagame signed a historic memorandum of understanding, July 30, in Pretoria over withdrawal of militia troops from each other's country.

The government of Rwanda reaffirmed its readiness to withdraw from the territory of DRC as soon as effective measures that address its security concerns, in particular the dismantling of the ex-FAR (Rwandan Armed Forces) and Interahamwe (Rwanda Hutu Militia forces in DRC).

Under the agreement, DRC is to round up and extradite an estimated 12,000 Hutu militia troops said to be hiding within DRC territory within 30 days, to be followed 15 days later by Rwanda's withdrawal of 30,000 of its troops, now inside DRC. The withdrawal is meant to be completed within a 45-day period.

The Interahamwe and ex-FAR armed groups fled to various countries, including the DRC, after participating in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. In the memorandum of understanding, DRC stated that it did not wish to have these armed groups present in their land.

"The DRC government does not want its territory to be used as a base for attacks against its neighbouring countries," said the memorandum.

[Background Info. Congo (DR), page 794:a]

c. UN finds mass grave: The United Nations military observers have discovered a mass grave containing the hacked bodies of women and children outside a northeastern Congolese town, a spokesman said, Aug 10.

The bodies were found near Bunia, where at least 85 people have been killed during four days of fighting.

Hamadoun Toure, spokesman for the UN mission in Congo, said unarmed military observers based in Bunia found the grave

containing 38 bodies, Aug 9. Another 37 bodies were found at a different site, Aug 7. Eleven Ugandan soldiers were also killed during fighting in Bunia, some 1,575 km northeast of the Congolese capital, Kinshasa, Toure said.

Uganda originally backed the rebels, but during the fighting reportedly switched its support to the Hema fighters. The death toll is likely to rise once the fighting ends as more neighbourhoods in the trading centre become accessible to the handful of unarmed UN observers, Toure said from Kinshasa.

"We have not had access to all areas due to security problems," he said.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

IVORY COAST

a. ADB lends US \$ 72m for rural development: The African Development Bank (ADB) has agreed to lend the government of Ivory Coast a total of US \$72 million for rural development, social services and economic development, the bank reported, Aug 6.

The Ivorian minister of economic affairs, Bohoun Bouabre, and ADB vice-president Bisi Ogunjobi signed an agreement for the three loans, Aug 6, in Abidjan.

A loan of US \$32 million will finance programmes to improve the education system and for the youth while US \$19 million will help fund rural development in the Middle Comoe region within the framework of decentralisation and poverty reduction, the bank said.

The third loan - for US \$19 million - is for programmes to encourage macro-economic growth, agriculture, private-sector growth and increasing efficiency in public expenditure. It is also to be used for the delivery of education and health services.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

DJIBOUTI

a. UK promises to get tough over oil spill: The British government has said it is prepared to get tough on the people responsible for a major toxic spill in the port of Djibouti.

Three men died and a number were seriously injured as a result of a major spillage of chemicals in the port in January 2002.

UK environment minister Michael Meacher has ordered that the chemicals involved plus 2,000 tonnes of contaminated soil are to be shipped back to the UK at a cost to the British taxpayer of around 1 million (\$1.6 million).

Meacher told the BBC radio programme 'Face the Facts', which has been investigating the spillage, that the "polluter will pay" for the spill.

The company named in the report as being responsible for the shipment of hundreds of plastic jerricans of highly concentrated wood preservative to Djibouti, for use in Ethiopia, is CSI Wood Protection, which is based in the northwest of England,

but is American-owned. It is not known if it was the company that was responsible for the spillage or those who unloaded the shipment, but questions are being asked as to why the shipment of the 300 tonnes of wood preservative was done in plastic containers instead of in steel containers.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

ERITREA

a. Committee to protect journalists: During a recent fact-finding mission to Eritrea, a presidential official told a delegation from the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) that eight independent journalists are currently imprisoned and held incommunicado.

Although the official, presidential spokesperson Yermane Gebremesken, cited eight journalists, CPJ puts the total number of journalists jailed in Eritrea at 13, it was reported, Aug 2.

The government acknowledgement came more than 10 months after the regime of President Isaias Afewerki shut down the nation's private press and rounded up independent journalists in a sweeping crackdown on dissent.

The presidential spokesperson told the CPJ delegates that "about eight" news professionals were being held in detention facilities, whose whereabouts he refused to disclose.

According to CPJ sources, a total of 13 journalists are currently held. Ten were arrested in September, 2001, and three were detained in February. Until March 31, all 13 journalists were confined in dingy cells at Police Station One in the capital, Asmara. At that time, they began a hunger strike to protest their imprisonment. Security forces then transferred nine of the hunger strikers to undisclosed detention facilities, and their families have since been denied any contact with them.

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

[Background Info. Eritrea, page 735:a]

ETHIOPIA

a. China to extend technical aid: Ethiopia and China have signed an agreement, which allows the latter to provide Ethiopia with technical and equipment assistance for the establishment of six textile and garment training centres, it was reported, Aug 9.

It was disclosed at the signing ceremony held at the Chinese ministry of trade and industry that the training centres will be constructed at the Oromia, Tigray, and Addis Ababa regions.

According to Tadesse Haile, Ethiopian state minister of trade and industry, who visited Beijing and Shanghai, the governments of Ethiopia and China reached the agreement considering the immense opportunity the sector could offer to the business community in particular and the country's economic development in general. He also said that the Ethiopian government has given prime attention to develop the sector and would like to seize the opportunity that China offers to Ethiopia.

China has allocated around five million Birr and will send five experts to train Ethiopians for ten months. Upon completion of the construction of the centres, China will provide equipment.

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

GAMBIA

a. Congolese correspondent held without charge: Reporters Without Borders, July 30, called for the immediate and unconditional release of Congolese journalist Guy-Patrick Massoloka, who was arrested on July 19 by officials of the National Intelligence Agency (NIA) without having been charged.

"This arrest, coinciding with the promulgation of a law creating a national media commission, is disturbing for press freedom in Gambia," Reporters Without Borders secretary-general Robert Minard said in a letter to Gambian President Yaya Jammeh.

"As far as we know, nothing justifies this journalist's prolonged detention," Minard said in the letter, adding that, "Reporters Without Borders is astonished that the NIA has presented no serious charge or justification for the arrest and that no one has been able to contact Massoloka."

Following his arrest, Massoloka was taken to the headquarters of the NIA (the Gambian secret service), where he is still being held. Although he had resided in Gambia for just one month prior to his arrest, the NIA has claimed that he was publishing an unregistered weekly there. This is denied by the Gambian journalists union. The real reasons for his detention are still unknown.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info, Gambia, page 783:a]

KENYA

a. President Moi sacks Kamotho, Gumo: Joseph Kamotho, who held the environment and natural resources portfolios, was sacked, Aug 11, along with Fred Gumo who had been an assistant minister in the office of the President Moi.

President Moi appointed Ngenye Kariuki of the opposition Safina Party minister for labour and human resource development and transferred Isaac Ruto to Environment to replace Kamotho. Kamotho has recently been vocal in his opposition to Uhuru Kenyatta, President Moi's preferred heir.

Gumo, on the other hand, has loudly supported Musalia Mudavadi, the minister for transport and communications, in his bid for the Presidency even as the President has frowned on the minister's move.

b. 10 countries sign declaration on arms: Kenya was among 10 countries that signed a declaration, Aug 8, to curb the proliferation of firearms in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa regions.

Foreign affairs minister Major (Rtd) Marsden Madoka signed on behalf of Kenya. Others were government ministers Ali Said Abdalla (Eritrea), Eriya Kategaya (Uganda) and Emmanuel Habyarimana (Rwanda).

The ambassador of Ethiopia to Kenya, Murrad Musa, Tanzanian High Commissioner to Kenya, M S H Sarakiky'a, ambassador of Djibouti to Somalia, Ismael Goulal also signed. Others were ambassador Nicodem Duhirubusa from Burundi foreign affairs ministry and the Democratic Republic of Congo's ambassador to Kenya, Tadumi On'okoko.

They signed the declaration at the Kenya School of Monetary Studies in Nairobi during the first ministerial review conference of the Nairobi Declaration on the problem of the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons in the region.

The two-day conference emphasised the need for concerted action to combat the scourge of small arms, conflicts and crime in the region.

c. Milk products import banned: The government has banned the import of milk products to boost the ailing local dairy industry, it was reported, Aug 9.

The Kenya Dairy Board announced that the ban would affect butter, various types of cheese and dry milk.

The board's managing director, Vincent Ngurare, said the move was in line with current efforts being undertaken to jump-start the sector.

He said the market was also over-supplied with milk and the ban on imports was meant to encourage local processors diversify into manufacturing those products.

"It is mandatory that they stay restricted until conditions for their importation are permissible," he said. He was speaking at the Spinknit Milk Manufacturing plant.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

LIBYA

a. Libya ready to compensate Lockerbie victims: Libya said it was ready in principle to pay compensation for the 1988 Lockerbie bombing that killed 270 people, it was reported, Aug 9.

Foreign minister Mohammed Abderrahmane Chalgam, speaking after unprecedented talks between Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi and Britain's junior foreign office minister Mike O'Brien, also said Libya wanted to formalize relations with the US.

"Regarding compensation, as a principle, yes we are going to do something on that topic", he said after the two and a half hour talks in Gaddafi's Bedouin tent on a Mediterranean beach in the town of Sirte.

"Regarding responsibility, we are discussing this issue....we are ready to get rid of this obstacle," he said.

Jim Swire, a spokesman for families of victims of the Lockerbie bombing, cautiously welcomed Libya's comments.

"I think we should regard it as a significant step forward, but of course, paying compensation is only one of the things that Libya has to do if it wants to get the UN sanctions permanently removed," he said.

Chalgam's comments came after Gaddafi held what officials said were his first talks with a British minister since he seized power in a 1969 revolution.

The talks cap a cautious re-engagement between the former foes after years of hostility following the fatal shooting of a British policewoman outside Libya's London embassy, British-backed US raids on Libya and the Lockerbie bombing.

UN sanctions imposed on Libya has been suspended. British officials said Chalgam's comments were the clearest signal yet the Libya would comply with remaining obligations to ensure their final lifting.

(SOURCE: *Statesman*, Calcutta)

[Background Info. Libya, page 762:a]

MALAWI

a. Journalist killed in bar: Reporters Without Borders, Aug 12, expressed concern about the death of freelance journalist Don Kulapani on August 8 during the hold-up of a bar in the capital.

"We ask you to fully clarify the circumstances of the journalist's death and to establish that it was not linked to the exercise of his profession", Reporters Without Borders secretary-general Robert Minard said in a letter to interior minister Monjeza Maluza.

"The fact that it coincides with recent attacks on journalists by the UDF's youth league is troubling, to say the least", Minard said in the letter, which requested that Reporters Without Borders be kept informed about the investigation's progress.

A freelancer who used to work for *The Chronicle* newspaper, Kulapani was in a bar in the capital, Lilongwe, on August 8 when four armed men entered and opened fire, hitting the journalist. They then stabbed him many times. The assailants took cases of beer, musical equipment and cash from the till before making off.

The journalist's death comes soon after the release of a statement by the ruling UDF denying news media claims that it had a unit tasked with silencing investigative journalists who "embarrass" the government.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Malawi, page 511:a]

MALI

a. Floods kill 3, scores made homeless: Three people died and many lost their homes in Mali following heavy rains and floods in the northern locality of Goundam and the capital, Bamako, in late July and early August, the ministry of security and civilian protection reported, Aug 6.

About 90 mm of rain fell in Goundam on July 26 and July 27 in one of the biggest downpours ever in the northern district. An old woman died, while a 14-year-old boy was killed as he tried to save his mother's belongings. Most of the houses, built of baked mud, crumbled as the rain fell for seven hours non-stop, local journalists said.

The minister of security and civilian protection, Souleymane Sidib, visited the area, taking emergency aid of more than 200 mt of cereals. The homeless were given shelter by neighbours whose homes had remained intact.

In Bamako, about 81 mm of rain fell during a nine-hour downpour, Aug 1. Almost the entire town was flooded, with water entering homes and offices. A 25-year-old man died when he stumbled on a bridge and was swept away.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MAURITANIA

a. Another newspaper publication seized: The ministry of the interior, posts and telecommunications has seized the July issue of *Le Renouvateur*, an independent bi-monthly newspaper, it was reported, Aug 9.

According to Cheikh Tidiane Dia, editor of the paper, no official explanation was given for the seizure, although he suspects that the ministry may have been unhappy about an article on foreign exchange and the increase in the prices of essential goods in the country. The ministry of interior routinely invokes Article 11 of the July 25, 1991 Law on Press Freedom in Mauritania, Act 91-023, to seize publications that are likely to undermine the principles of Islam or the image of the state, to harm the public good, to compromise public order and security.

Dia said he received notification of the seizure on July 30, one week after the issue in question had been duly registered. Newspapers in Mauritania are required to deposit five copies of each new issue at the ministry of interior for what amounts to prior censorship, before circulation.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MOROCCO

a. UN mission mandate extended by six months: The Security Council has extended the mandate of the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) for six months ending January 31, 2003, the council reported.

The council, which met in New York, agreed to extend MINURSO's mandate that was due to end, Aug 1, to give more time to allow the search for a peaceful solution to the 27-year old conflict between Morocco and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia-el-Hamra and Rio de Oro (Polisario Front).

The council called on both parties to fully cooperate with efforts to resolve their longstanding dispute. It urged them to cooperate with humanitarian organisations, including UNHCR, WFP and the International Committee of the Red Cross, which

continue to provide basic needs to refugees and thousands of prisoners of war.

The Red Cross estimates that 1,260 Moroccans are still held captive by Polisario. The council appealed to the international community to provide generous funding to UNHCR and WFP to continue work in the area.

Armed conflict broke out in 1975 when Morocco annexed Western Sahara, after Spain withdrew from the northwestern African territory. In 1991, both sides signed a ceasefire and allowed the deployment of MINURSO.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Morocco, page 726:a]

MOZAMBIQUE

a. Renamo deputy resigns: A prominent parliamentary deputy, Almeida Tambara, has resigned from Mozambique's largest opposition party, the former rebel movement Renamo, but intends to continue sitting in parliament as an independent, it was reported, Aug 12.

Tambara sent a letter resigning from the party to Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama on July 8. The letter simply cited Article 77 of the Mozambican constitution, which states that all citizens are free to join, or not to join, political parties.

Tambara was elected to the Mozambican parliament, the Assembly of the Republic, from the central province of Manica, in 1994 and again in 1999.

He was a senior figure in the Renamo parliamentary group, and was twice elected chairman of the ad-hoc commissions on finding a new national anthem for the country.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

NIGER

a. Loyal soldiers crush mutiny: Niger's loyal soldiers have quashed a mutiny staged by a section of soldiers.

The mutiny started on July 31 at Djifar, about 1600 kilometres to the southeast of Niger's capital city of Niamey and was quashed by the country's loyal soldiers four days later.

Reports say the dissident soldiers were reacting to poor working conditions within the military.

Tension had been building over the soldiers' dissatisfaction with the military hierarchy. A number of them openly discredited their commander, saying he was not qualified to head the military.

The rebel soldiers cited poor salaries as additional cause for their dissatisfaction. They called for unconditional increments, while pointing an accusing finger at their top boss for not having heeded their past concerns.

During the mutiny, rebellious soldiers took positions at the entrance of the town (Djifar) and sang slogans hostile to both the government and their head. They were equipped with sophisticated weapons. They had taken over a local radio station to announce their rebellion.

The country's Minister for Defence Mr Saidou Dadi Goah denounced the behaviour of the rebelling soldiers at Djifar. He called on them to return to barracks as a number of them, including some civilians, got arrested.

State of alert threatens independent media: Reporters Without Borders, Aug 7, voiced its concern about the threat to freedom of expression posed by a state of alert which President Mamadou Tandja decreed on Aug 5, following a mutiny by soldiers in garrisons in the far east of the country.

"We ask you not to use the state of alert as a pretext for muzzling the independent news media, which would represent a serious regression in the democratic process", Reporters Without Borders secretary-general Robert Minard said in a letter to President Tandja, requesting the decree's repeal. "We remind you that press freedom is guaranteed under Niger's constitution", the letter said.

Under the decree, "the dissemination by any news media of reports or allegations liable to cast doubt on national defence operations is forbidden". Any violation of these measures will result in the suspension or closure of the news media and the printing press that produces it, together with confiscation of equipment. Any person contributing to the dissemination or publication of such reports is also liable to be punished. Journalists have allegedly received threats from the police and the minister of communications.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

NIGERIA

a. Alarm over 15 missing women: Itsekiri, Ijaw and Ilaje women who seized the Warri operational headquarters of Shell and ChevronTexaco recently, claimed that 15 of them were missing.

About 800 were injured in their encounter with security agents during the seizure, they told newsmen in Warri.

They, however, said no life was lost during the face-off. According to them, the whereabouts of the 15 could not be ascertained.

The injured 800, they said, were currently receiving treatment in hospitals and herbal homes. They issued a 48-hour ultimatum to Shell and ChevronTexaco managements to find the missing women or face further action.

[Background Info. Nigeria, page 799:a]

b. Twenty arrested over cult clash: No fewer than 20 cultists have been detained at the Ogun State police headquarters over their alleged involvement in the weekend clash which led to the killing of three members, it was reported, Aug 12.

The arrested suspects were said to have been involved in the killing of members at Onikolobo and Sapon areas, Aug 9.

Informed sources explained that a violent clash had broken out between members of rival Eiye and Buckaneer confraternities, Aug 8, which later resulted in the killing of the three members.

Further investigation showed that the clash saw the use of dangerous weapons with several persons receiving serious machet cuts.

While confirming the arrest and the killings of suspected cultists in the clash, the command spokesman, Kingstour Irozuru, said that the arrests were made outside the Moshood Abiola Polytechnic campus.

(SOURCE: *Post Express*, Lagos)

RWANDA

a. Journalists released: Three journalists who had been sentenced to 30 days of preventative detention were released, Aug 7, on the condition that they remain in the capital, Kigali, and report regularly to the police.

However, it is unclear whether the charges against them have been dropped.

Robert Sebufirira, Elly MacDowell Kalisa, and Emmanuel Munyaneza, all with the independent weekly *Umuseso*, were detained on July 17 and charged with assault, battery, and insulting a police officer. They were sentenced on July 23.

The charges stem from a July 17 incident that took place at Bar Addis Ethiopian in the Kiyovu district of Kigali. Sebufirira, Kalisa, and Munyaneza arrived at the establishment after work and found a crowd gathered outside. When they went to investigate, they learned that the proprietor of the bar had called the police to deal with a rowdy patron, who then attempted to resist arrest once the police arrived.

The patron identified himself as a member of the military and claimed that civilian police did not have the authority to arrest him. A fistfight ensued between the police and the patron, and some of the bystanders reportedly started shouting at the journalists to take note of the police and the soldier's conduct and make sure to report it in the newspaper.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Rwanda, page 799:b]

SOMALIA

a. British-registered ship hijacked: A British-registered oil tanker and its crew hijacked by the militia off the northeastern coast of Somalia are being held by their captors, a local journalist said, Aug 12.

The members of the crew, who were taken from the vessel to the coastal village of Bareda, 150 km east of Bosaso, the commercial capital of the self-declared autonomous region of Puntland, had now been divided into small groups and sent to a number of different locations, Mukhtar Sa'id of the Bosaso-based Midnimo Radio, said. Another source in Bosaso said that the militia had done this in order to "make it difficult to rescue them". "Reports of British warships looking for the ship and crew may have scared them", he said. The ship's captain, however, was still being held in Bareda, said Mukhtar.

So far the hijackers had made no demands, "but in previous situations like this, they have demanded ransom", he added. The Puntland administration of Col Abdullahi Yusuf had not yet issued any statement regarding the ship, Mukhtar said.

b. Abducted UN employee released: The United Nations has welcomed the release of Abdulkadir Mohamed Abikar, a UN project staff member, who was abducted on August 5.

He was released unconditionally in the Somali capital, Mogadishu, on August 10, a press statement from UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator's Office for Somalia said, Aug 12.

"Abikar has undergone a medical examination and is reported to be in good health. He has been reunited with his family in the city, and is scheduled to resume his duties as the Officer-In-Charge of the Mogadishu office of the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation's (FAO) Food Security Assessment Unit after a short break," said the statement.

It said that the UN strongly condemned abductions and other attacks on its staff members, and took this opportunity to emphasise its humanitarian mandate to help the people of Somalia.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SOUTH AFRICA

a. Scorn over AIDS drug probe: South African activists said a government investigation into a key anti-AIDS drug was making the country a laughing stock by questioning its toxicity and effectiveness, it was reported, Aug 7.

South Africa's highest court ordered the government in July to stop blocking the universal provision at public hospitals of the drug Nevirapine to help prevent mother-to-child transmission of the disease. The government had refused universal provision of Nevirapine and other anti-AIDS drugs on cost and safety grounds.

Nearly 100,000 babies are born HIV-positive each year in a country with the highest number of people living with HIV-AIDS in the world. The Medicines Control Council (MCC) has been investigating Nevirapine since March after irregularities were found in trials of the drug in Uganda. The MCC expects to conclude investigations in September.

[Background Info. South Africa, page 800:a]

b. Fires destroyed 200,000 ha of grazing land: Free State Agriculture, Aug 5, said about 200,000 ha of grazing land was destroyed in the wild fires that ravaged the province recently.

At an emergency meeting attended by about 80 farmers at the Allemanskraal Dam it was established that 630 head of cattle, 452 sheep and three horses had perished in the blaze, Free State Agriculture said in a statement.

Free State Agriculture president Kiewiet Ferreira thanked the government for assistance. The damage would, for instance,

have been far greater had the SA Air Force not made available the four Oryx helicopters that helped fight the fires, he said.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, Madras and *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

SUDAN

a. 20,000 refugees flee to Lira: Humanitarian organisations have confirmed the arrival in Lira of 17,000 refugees, something area MPs say is "potentially explosive."

United Nations High Commission for Refugees spokeswoman Bushra Malik said, Aug 7, that the group joins another 3,000 already in Lira.

The mostly Sudanese refugees are to stay at Lira Boma Grounds for two days before relocation at the Kiryandongo refugee camp in Masindi district, according to Malik.

The refugees fled Rachkoko following the rebel attack on Acol Pii refugee settlement in Pader district.

Kiryandongo holds another 3,000 Sudanese refugees.

b. Kony death toll hits 58: The death toll in the Kony rebel attack on Achol-pii refugee camp in Pader district, Aug 5, has reached 58.

Meanwhile, President Yoweri Museveni, Aug 6, removed the 301st brigade commander, Lt Col Sherrif Gava. The brigade oversees the security in the area, sources said.

Of the dead, 50 were Sudanese refugees and Ugandan internally displaced people while eight were UPDF soldiers, security sources in Gulu said. However, the army insisted that only four soldiers, one of them a lieutenant, were killed. The lieutenant was the camp commandant. Fourth Division spokesman Lt Paddy Ankunda said 38 civilians were killed in the camp and in the vicinity.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info, Sudan, page 801:a]

SWAZILAND

a. Uproar over king's new jet: The Swazi Senate, Aug 1, called for the arrest of Prime Minister Sibusiso Dlamini over the cabinet's use of development funds to purchase a US \$45 million luxury jet for King Mswati III, amid a food crisis that threatens a quarter of the population.

A US \$20 million down payment was made to ExecuJet, a South African firm representing Bombardier Aerospace, the Canadian manufacturer of the 18-seater Global Express Bombardier corporate-style long-range jet for Mswati. To purchase the plane, the Prime Minister took funds earmarked by parliament to build factory shells for foreign investors and to upgrade the road infrastructure.

"Cabinet's misappropriation of these funds is a criminal act," said Senator Rowan Howe. "What will the country's image be internationally, especially because almost all the people in the Lowveld are starving?" Legally only parliament has the authority to appropriate government funds. UN agencies operating in

Swaziland reported recently that US \$19 million in emergency aid was needed to ensure the survival of 250,000 Swazis left without sustenance because of drought-induced crop failures.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

TOGO

a. Opposition leader arrested: Opposition leader, Claude Amganvi, was arrested, Aug 6, and detained at the state CID office for a newspaper publication which police authorities have attributed to him.

The *Agoa Nam* newspaper had carried an article on the reported wealth of President Eyadma and his son, Faure Gnassingb. According to the minister of interior and security, Gen Sizing Akawilou Walla, it was Julien Ayi, editor of another newspaper, the *Nouvel Echo*, who named the opposition leader as the author of the article.

Claude Amganvi is a trade unionist and chairman of the Workers Party. He is also editor-in-chief of the trade union newspaper *Nyawo*.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

UGANDA

a. Army kills 26 LRA rebel fighters: The Ugandan army said, Aug 7, it had killed 26 Kony rebels in Gulu and Pader districts when they attacked Achol-pii refugee camp.

At least 50 internally displaced Ugandans and Sudanese refugees and eight soldiers were killed in the attack.

The army said in the first clash near Achol-pii, it killed 11 rebels. The army lost eight. The second battle was on Aug 5, at Cwero in Aswa county in Gulu district, where six rebels were killed and six guns recovered. The third battle was on Aug 6, at Kalongo in Pader district where nine rebels were killed, among them rebel commanders, John Ojok and Oola.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Uganda, page 802:a]

ZAMBIA

a. IMF was aware of high level of corruption: International Monetary Fund (IMF) resident representative Mark Ellyne said, Aug 7, that IMF was aware of high level of corruption during President Chiluba's regime.

In an interview, Aug 7, Ellyne said the IMF has always insisted on the privatisation of the parastatals which were being used in the abuse of state resources. "Privatised companies are unlikely to co-operate in this kind of abuses," Ellyne said.

"When public enterprises make big losses, they are either subsidised genuinely or funds are being abused," Ellyne cited examples of the loss of up to US \$100 million by the now liquidated Zambia National Oil Company (ZNOC) and the over

US \$60 million in the cobalt sales. "We have since asked the Auditor General to do some audits on ZNOC," Ellyne said.

"When a parastatal like ZNOC loses US \$100 million you know there is a big problem". However, Ellyne said the IMF supported the ongoing probe into corruption but cautioned government officials not to ignore their obligations towards achieving their economic targets.

(SOURCE: *Times of Zambia*, Lusaka)

[Background Info. Zambia, page 789:a]

ZIMBABWE

a. 15,000 throng Chinhoyi Stadium to celebrate holiday: The spirits of the seven gallant fighters who fired the first shots of the liberation struggle in 1966 must have rejoiced when Chinhoyi Stadium rocked as an estimated 15,000 people celebrated the Heroes' holiday with song and dance, Aug 12.

The musical gig must have surprised even the organisers (ZBC) themselves as perhaps one of the largest crowds comprising people from many parts of the country thronged to witness the event. And even in the morning, when all people had left, a joyous mood hung over the small town as dance-weary citizens of the farming town exchanged notes on events of the night. From the beginning the gig showed signs of proper planning - or perhaps it was the right place and right time to do it which made things fall into place.

b. Mugabe offers sops to loyal white farmers: Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe, who ordered white farmers to pack up and leave said, Aug 12, that loyal farmers willing to cooperate with his government would not be left completely landless.

"All genuine and well meaning white farmers who wish to pursue a farming career as loyal citizens of this country will have land to do so," Mugabe said.

After ignoring government orders throwing them off their land, hundreds of white farmers had anxiously awaited Mugabe's annual Heroes' day address to the nation, marking the guerilla war that ended white rule more than two decades ago.

The deadlock between white farmers and the government continued for a fourth day, Aug 12. Farmers remaining on their land reported no official action to forcibly evict them since the deadline, Aug 8, mid-night. Mugabe stopped short of calling for immediate action against defiant farmers. However, those who "want another war should think again when they still have time to do so," he said.

Mugabe said no white farmers would go without land but his government would not allow whites to remain on large properties or own more than one farm while clinging to ties with Britain, the former colonial powers.

"To those who want to win this country for Britain, the game is up and it is time for them to go where they belong. There is no room for rapacious supremacists," he said.

There was no immediate reaction to the speech from the Commercial Farmers Union, which represents the country's 4,000 white farmers. Justice for Agriculture, a new group urging farmers to challenge the evictions in court, said at least 1,000 farmers affected by eviction orders owned only one property. The group took no solace from Mugabe's speech.

"We would be much happier if words were met with action on the ground," said Jenin Williams, spokeswoman for the group. Nearly 3,000 white farmers have been ordered to leave their land as part of the country's often violent programme to seize white-owned farms and give them to blacks.

The government has targeted 95 per cent of white-owned farms for seizure. Several senior government officials have warned white farmers they face arrest and possible imprisonment of up to two years if they continue to defy eviction orders.

Mugabe did not directly refer to the eviction deadline. But in his fiery speech railing against colonialism and Britain, Mugabe strongly criticized white farmers opposing the government's policies.

"No farmer to our knowledge has been rendered landless. Only the greedy are complaining," he said. Opposition officials, human rights workers and farm leaders say hundreds of farmers have been thrown off all their land. The government says its "fast track" land seizure programme was launched in 2000 as a final effort to correct colonial era imbalance in land ownership.

Critics say it is part of the increasingly authoritarian government's effort to maintain power amid more than two years of economic chaos and political violence mainly blamed on the ruling party. The eviction deadline came as half of Zimbabwe's 12.5 million people face a severe hunger crisis, according to the World Food Program. The UN agency blames the crisis on drought combined with the agricultural chaos caused by the seizures of commercial farms, mainly owned by whites.

[Background Info. Zimbabwe, page 779:a]

c. MP denied bail: Chief Justice Godfrey Chidyausiku, Aug 8, dismissed Kuwadzana Member of Parliament Learnmore Jongwe's bail application, saying the temptation for the accused to abscond if granted bail was compelling.

The Chief Justice said the state's version of what happened was more believable than Jongwe's defence. Jongwe was likely to abscond since the prospects of conviction and even the death sentence were high, the judge ruled. Chidyausiku said: "I am equally satisfied that the prospects of conviction and upon conviction the imposition of a long prison term, indeed, even the death sentence are real. The temptation for Jongwe to abscond if granted bail is irresistible.

"On this basis alone I would dismiss the appeal," the Chief Justice said. Jongwe, 28, charged with stabbing his wife, Rutendo Jongwe, at their Belvedere home on July 19, had appealed to the Supreme Court for an order reversing a High Court decision to deny him bail.

The former spokesman for the opposition MDC is denying the charge. Jongwe, himself a lawyer, has raised a defence of "extreme cumulative provocation", saying he caught his wife, who had recently graduated from the University of Zimbabwe law school, being intimate with a Harare lawyer, Donald Mashingaidze, in the latter's offices in Harare.

"It is pertinent to observe at this point that the State version of events leading to the killing of the deceased is plausible and has a ring of truth, while Jongwe's version as set out in his statement recorded by the police is riddled with improbabilities," said Chidyausiku.

The judge said according to the affidavit of the police officer investigating the case, Rutendo had met the alleged lover only once previously.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, Madras and *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

ANALYSIS

Congo: War of plunder

Rwanda is cynically prolonging its violent occupation of the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo in order to plunder its mineral riches, an *Observer* investigation has suggested.

Eyewitnesses, intelligence officers, human rights workers and diplomats say the precondition for Rwanda's withdrawal contained in a peace plan signed recently is largely a pretext.

Under its deal with Congo to end war estimated to have cost 3 million lives, Rwanda promised to withdraw its troops once Hutu militiamen had been disarmed. But the consistent testimony of observers, including diplomats from countries formerly sympathetic to Rwanda, says that its government is grossly exaggerating the numbers of the Interahamwe militiamen who

carried out the Rwandan genocide before fleeing to Congo. Its efforts to round them up, they say, are dubious at best.

Many accuse Rwandan soldiers of collaborating with the Hutu militiamen to maintain their excuse for occupying Congo and plundering a mineral-rich expanse 27 times the size of Rwanda.

"The Rwandans invaded Congo to chase the Interahamwe and found themselves lords of land," said a senior North American diplomat in Kigali.

"The Interahamwe is now a very convenient excuse for Rwanda to loot Congo. Maybe it's 20 per cent threat, 80 per cent for show".

Eastern Congo was lawless before Rwanda invaded four years ago to round up the Interahamwe. Now resistance fighters and bandit gangs rule, fighting each other and preying on civilians.

Rwanda's soldiers and the rebels it created and controls are at the forefront of the killing, says Human Rights Watch. "regularly slaughtering civilians in massacres".

All factions stand accused of atrocities. But because most militias were formed to resist Rwanda's occupation, Rwanda bears most responsibility, diplomats say.

"It's clear to us the killing continues because Rwanda refuses to leave Congo. Rwanda must leave eastern Congo," said a French diplomat in Kinshasa, Congo's capital.

Congo's government has maintained the Interahamwe's threat to Rwanda by supplying them with arms. But, with its army incapable of resisting Rwanda's efficient troops—who captured Kinshasa in May 1997 and almost again in August 1998—many diplomats in the region describe this as a legitimate military tactic.

"What should the Congolese do?" said a North American diplomat in Kinshasa. "They're under attack....it's the rules of war".

Rwanda says 55,000 of the Interahamwe are hiding in Congo, in the forest of the east or the ranks of Congo's army. According to the International Crisis Group, a privately funded organization working to resolve conflict, the true figure is less than half that, with as few as 8,000 in occupied eastern Congo.

Up to 90 per cent of these were recruited from refugee camps after 1994, it says—so only a small proportion were involved in the genocide. "The Interahamwe remains a threat to be dealt with, but is not a threat to the Rwandan regime," said the Kigali diplomat.

The success of the plan signed in Pretoria two weeks ago depends on both sides cooperating with the United Nations mission in Congo to disarm the Interahamwe.

So far this effort has been hampered by the expulsion from eastern Congo of the UN's most active political officer, who was accused by Rwanda's rebel proxies of launching a grenade attack on a Catholic church.

Other UN political officers cite lesser examples of Rwandan obstruction. They claim to have been prevented by Rwanda's rebels from meeting General Joseph Padiri, a Congolese resistance leader fighting alongside the Interahamwe.

"The Rwandans are very good at paying lip service and then throwing a spanner in the works", said one UN officer. "How serious are they about solving the Interahamwe issue when they

seem to be fighting everyone in eastern Congo except the Interahamwe? Their security concern has become a joke".

Patrick Mazimhaka, special adviser on the Great Lakes to Rwanda's President Paul Kagame, said that Rwanda's campaign against the Interahamwe was continuing. "We are pursuing the Interahamwe.

These battles in eastern Congo has not ceased," he said. As evidence of this, Mazimhaka said several of the Interahamwe were recently captured near the town of Mwenga. But refugees from Mwenga arriving in the border town of Mukavu said there had been no recent fighting between Rwanda soldiers and the Interahamwe, only repeated looting under the nose of the Rwandan garrison.

Refugees, fighters of all factions, and Western aid workers from Ngedo, Kulungutwe, Kilambi, Kasika and Kamituga in the Mwenge region, Katasumuva near the Kahuzi-Biega national park, and Walikale all accused Rwandan soldiers of collaborating with their supposed enemies.

At a recent meeting with UN officers in Tanzania, the commander of the Interahamwe's Mwenga-based Tanganyika brigade, who calls himself Saddam Hussein, alleged that Rwandan soldiers supplied him with arms.

Bahati Pole Pole, 25, a Rwandan-trained, rebel fighter stationed in Kamituga, said his orders were no longer to pursue the Interahamwe.

"Rwanda came here to fight the Interahamwe but its objectives have changed", he said. "These days, we only pretend to fight them—it's all politics".

According to Marie-Joe Bonnet, a French surgeon working with the Catholic Church, Rwandan soldiers and Interahamwe militiamen coexist peacefully around the goldmines near her clinic in remote Lwinja.

"If the Rwandans wanted to round up the Hutus, they could have done so long ago", she said. "But they just want to control the country—where there are no riches, there are no Rwandans".

Only Britain, Rwanda's biggest donor and staunchest ally, remains uncritical of its occupation of eastern Congo. Clare Short, the International Development Secretary, has made Rwanda "a special case for international assistance"—it receives around \$45 m of British aid every year. She has consistently refused to comment on its alleged atrocities and long-term ambitions in Congo, and refused to comment on this report.

"My fear is that Britain is going to end up an international pariah because of its support for Rwanda," said a senior British official in Kinshasa. "We've got to think about who we're backing".

—James Astill in *Guardian Weekly*, published in *Deccan Herald*, Bangalore, Aug 2002)

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ANGOLA

a. Rwandan genocide suspect arrested: Angola has arrested a top Rwandan genocide suspect, the US state department said, Aug. 15.

Gen Augustin Bizimungu, head of the Rwandan military during the 1994 genocide, was arrested with assistance from the US state department, spokesman Philip Reeker said.

About 800,000 ethnic Tutsis and moderate Hutus were killed in 100 days by armed militias.

The Angolan government has said that it located Gen Bizimungu in a camp for UNITA rebel soldiers who are being demobilized.

An Angolan government statement said that it had been asked to hand the general over to the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, which has issued a warrant for his arrest.

Both Angola and Rwanda are heavily involved in the complex war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Angola to hand over suspect to ICTR: Angola announced, Aug. 12, that it would handover Gen Bizimungu to the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR).

"Bizimungu is one of 68 Rwandan military [men] who, like another 583 soldiers from the Democratic Republic of the Congo [DRC], formed the foreign forces illegally stationed in DRC territory fighting institutions of the Angolan state," the news agency, Angop, citing a government communique, said.

Angop reported that Bizimungu would be handed to the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in Arusha, Tanzania. The ICTR is prosecuting suspects accused of masterminding the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.

The US government has offered rewards of up to US \$5 million for information leading to the arrest of nine suspects believed to be living in the DRC, of whom Bizimungu, who was the former commander of the ex-Rwandan armed forces, is one. He fled to the DRC when the Rwandan Patriotic Army captured the Rwandan capital, Kigali, in 1994.

(SOURCE: *Namibian*, Windhoek)

BENIN

a. EC announces new aid programme: The European Commission has announced an aid programme for Benin worth 275 million euros (over US \$269 million) for 2002-2007, it was reported, Aug. 14.

The main objective of the programme is to support Benin's poverty reduction efforts through sustainable economic and

social development and to facilitate Benin's integration into the world economy. The EC commissioner responsible for development cooperation and humanitarian aid, Poul Nielson, welcomed "this step forward which places poverty reduction at the heart of the EU's cooperation with Benin".

Benin will receive 208 million euros for the priority sectors of road transport, health and macro-economic and institutional support, while another 67 million euros will be mobilised to provide any additional support in case of external shocks, such as short term fluctuations in export earnings resulting from falling prices for agricultural commodities.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BOTSWANA

a. Furore over Zimbabwe's fuel debt: A storm is brewing in parliament over a 20-million-litre fuel credit which Botswana extended to Zimbabwe in March 2000.

Zimbabwe's failure to service the debt had sowed seeds of discord amongst Botswana MPs who accuse their leader, Festus Mogae, of using public funds without consultation.

The opposition and radical MPs from the ruling party were ganging up to rap the government ahead of the opening of parliament on November 4. So serious is the issue that it could strain relations between Gaborone and Harare.

The Botswana parliamentary finance committee, led by Duke Lefokgo, is expected to present an adverse report on Mogae's government after the opening of parliament.

A member of the parliamentary finance committee who spoke to the *Independent* from Gaborone confirmed they were preparing a report on the government's financial situation and that the Zimbabwean debt was "certainly top of the agenda".

b. 17 white farmers' applications to settle in Botswana rejected: Botswana has rejected applications by 17 white Zimbabwean farmers to settle in the country.

The permanent secretary in the Botswana agricultural ministry, Masego Mphathi, said: "It is not the policy of the government to encourage farmers from Zimbabwe to settle in Botswana and there would never be any special assistance for them.

"We do not have any land to allocate them," said Mphathi. The Botswana government ruled out offering land or providing assistance to farmers evicted under the ongoing land reform programme.

Mphathi told the Botswana Press Association that some of the farmers suggested forming partnerships with Botswana farmers.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Botswana, page 806:a]

BURUNDI

a. Rebel attack puts 2,000 to flight: At least 2,000 people fled their homes in the Mubone zone in Bujumbura Rural Province, Aug 20, during fighting between Hutu rebels and government troops, news reports and humanitarian sources said, Aug 23.

Radio Publique Africaine reported that the residents of Mubone fled to Ruziba, Mutambu and Kabezi when rebels of the Forces Nationales de Liberation attacked a government position there. The fighting interrupted a polio immunisation effort in the zone. However, health teams followed fleeing residents and continued the vaccinations in places of refuge.

In another development, the Burundi human rights body, Iteka, reported that close to 1,000 Congolese Banyamulenge refugees whose thatched homes were burnt in Rugombo, Cibitoke Province, recently were still without shelter. Iteka said that only churches had, so far, provided aid to this community. The cause of the fire had not yet been established.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

a. Coup trial resumes: The trial of alleged coup plotters resumed, Aug 22, in the criminal court in Bangui, after a five-month suspension following a boycott by defence lawyers in protest against the barring of one of their colleagues from appearing in court.

State-owned Radio Centrafrique reported that the sitting was largely dedicated to preliminary formalities, such as the appointment of defence counsels, and informing the accused of the charges against them.

The current session, which is due to last until September 20, will hear the cases of former President Andre Kolingba and his supporters, who will be judged in absentia. The court will also adjudicate on the case of former defence minister Jean Jacques Demafouth and 80 co-accused in the alleged plot to overthrow President Ange-Felix Patasse on May 28, 2001.

The trial, which began on February 15, was postponed on August 12 for logistical reasons. Radio Centrafrique reported at the time that bad weather and road conditions had prevented six jurors from reaching Bangui by the scheduled date. In addition, two public holidays fell during the week of the trial.

Fugitive army general calls for President's resignation: Francois Bozize, the Central African Republic's (CAR) fugitive army general, has called for the resignation of President Ange-Felix Patasse, it was reported, Aug 14.

Bozize said he would not return home from exile in Chad until after Patasse's departure.

Gen Bozize fled to avoid arrest on the orders of a judicial commission probing a failed coup on May 28, 2001. He said, Aug 13, that only 40 of his estimated 300 renegade soldiers had crossed into Chad, and that Chadian soldiers had disarmed them all. "However, the rest remained intact inside the CAR," he said.

Bozize was speaking following reports that his forces had on August 10 captured the northern town of Kabo, 65 km south of CAR's border with Chad. Bozize said that his men had "emptied the arms depot" of the First Operational Unit of the CAR capital, Bangui, of some 1,000 weapons and an assortment of ammunition. "CAR authorities know that very well. There is no use denying this to accuse Chad," he said.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info, Central African Republic, page 807:a]

CONGO

a. Sassou-Nguesso sworn in as President: Denis Sassou-Nguesso was sworn in, Aug 14, as President of the Republic of Congo (ROC), following his election on March 10.

This was the first time Sassou-Nguesso has been elected to the presidency - an office he first seized in 1979 and held until 1992, and then seized again in 1997 and held until the present day.

The investiture took place in the presence of seven African heads of state - Omar Bongo of Gabon, Idriss Deby of Chad, Obiang Nguema of Equatorial Guinea, Amani Toumani Toure of Mali, Joseph Kabila of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Ange-Felix Patasse of the Central African Republic and Fradique de Menezes of Sao Tome and Principe.

During an address to mark the occasion, Sassou-Nguesso vowed to clean up public finances, create employment for youth, restore order in public administration, and pursue close cooperation with the rest of the world.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background info. Congo, page 759:b]

CONGO (DR)

a. Tight security on DRC border: The Ugandan army (UPDF) has tightened security on the Democratic Republic of Congo border following clashes between two Congolese rebel factions in Bunia and Beni.

The commander of the 507 brigade that oversees the border, Lt. Col. Dura Mawa, said the soldiers were on full alert to prevent the clashes from spreading or causing any harm to the people at the border.

"Our troops at the borderlines are watching the situation at a close range and are fully prepared to repulse any infiltration," Mawa told *The New Vision*, Aug 19.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

EGYPT

a. Bush denies aid on human rights issue: In a letter to President Hosni Mubarak, US President George Bush has said he would oppose any new aid to Egypt to protest the imprisonment of human rights activist Saad Eddin Ibrahim.

The 63-year sociology professor at the American University in Cairo was convicted in July on charges of embezzlement, receiving foreign funds without authorization and tarnishing Egypt's name. He was sentenced to serve a 7-year prison term, it was reported, Aug 16.

Local and international human rights groups have charged that the prosecution of Ibrahim is part of an effort to silence rights activists. Bush's letter to Mubarak will not affect the nearly \$2 billion in economic and military assistance the United States provides to Egypt annually. And as of Aug 15, no new assistance for Egypt beyond that sum had been announced.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

ERITREA

a. President Isayas pledges to free Ethiopian PoWs: The Eritrean government has pledged to free some 300 Ethiopian prisoners of war (PoWs) captured during its border war with Ethiopia between 1998 and 2000, an official of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said, Aug 22.

Vincent Bernard, the ICRC communications delegate, said the pledge was made by Eritrean President Isayas Afewerki during a meeting with the visiting ICRC President Jakob Kellenberger, Aug 20. The ICRC president went to Eritrea to raise unresolved issues of humanitarian concern, "especially PoWs and civilian internees", said Bernard.

The return of all PoWs was part of the Algiers peace agreement, signed on December 12, 2000 by the two Horn of Africa neighbours to end their conflict.

Eritrea was releasing PoWs "based on human consideration and respect for the Geneva Convention and the Algiers Peace Agreement it signed", the Eritrean news agency said, Aug 20.

The ICRC has welcomed the Eritrean pledge "and is preparing to send a team to the POW camp to interview the prisoners" in accordance with ICRC procedures to establish whether they wanted to return, Bernard said.

Annan welcomes PoWs commitment: UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan has welcomed a pledge by Eritrea and Ethiopia to release all remaining prisoners of war (PoWs).

In a press statement, the Secretary-General's spokesman said the pledge to free some 1,300 Eritrean and 300 Ethiopian PoWs "will no doubt contribute to the successful implementation of the peace process between the two countries".

The commitments were made during official visits to Eritrea and Ethiopia earlier by the president of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Jakob Kellenberger.

According to the ICRC, the main objective of the visits was "to ensure the release and repatriation of all remaining prisoners of war in accordance with the Third Geneva Convention and the peace agreement signed in Algiers on December 12, 2000".

The Eritrean government will start releasing and repatriating the Ethiopian PoWs on August 29 under the auspices of the ICRC.

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

[Background Info. Eritrea, page 364:a]

ETHIOPIA

a. Journalists' Association opposes revised press law: The Ethiopian Free Press Journalists' Association (EFJA) has opposed the revised press law and the code of ethics for journalists, it was reported, Aug 23.

The government is about to finalize the new press law, and according to Kifle Mulat, EFJA president, parliament is expected to approve it soon, which would severely affect freedom of the free press in Ethiopia more seriously than the former press law.

Besides, Kifle said that the new press law neither incorporates private journalists nor the Association, hence, would not reconcile with the overall press situation in the country and would discourage the development of the free press in Ethiopia, "which is still in its infant stage."

Kifle further said that the revised press law would enable the government to control and oppress the private press more than before because the points to be included are not further discussed by the stakeholders, mainly the private press.

"We should have been invited for discussions before the submission of the document to the policy regulating body. We still are appealing to be part of the process," Kifle said.

Regarding the code of ethics, Kifle said that it is not and should never be the mandate and responsibility of the state to prepare journalistic code of ethics without the full participation of journalists in the country.

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

[Background Info. Ethiopia, page 783:a]

GAMBIA

a. Journalist flees to Dakar: Muhammed Mboyo, a reporter with the *Daily Observer* is reported to have fled the country to seek refuge in Dakar.

He was wanted for questioning by the National Intelligence Agency (NIA) for allegedly taking part in the running of an unlicensed newspaper in the country.

According to reports reaching *The Independent*, Mboyo crossed the borders of the country around July 19, following the arrest of his colleague, Guy Patrick Massoloko, a Congolese working for PANA, who was detained for two weeks on similar allegation.

Reports said after the arrest of Massoloko, the NIA had wanted to question Mboyo on similar allegation.

However, winds of the NIA plan filtered to Mboyo who subsequently fled the country to neighbouring Senegal where he is said to be seeking refugee. He is said to be currently stranded in Dakar and is concerned about his return to the country.

Massoloko has left the country after he was ordered to leave by immigration authorities following his release from NIA custody.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Gambia, page 809:a]

GHANA

a. Electoral officer jailed: An Accra community tribunal, Aug 22, sentenced Christian Quashie, 35, an assistant electoral officer to six months imprisonment with hard labour for illegally thumbprinting 50 ballot papers in the August 13 district and unit committee elections.

Police Inspector Michael Asamoah told the tribunal, chaired by Mrs. Elizabeth Ankomah that Quashie was arrested at Sampah in the Bortianor Electoral Area in the Ga South District where he was in-charge.

He said Quashie admitted during interrogation to have thumbprinted the papers to enable his friend Kwaku Tseve, former Assemblyman for Sampah to win the election again.

b. West Africa's cocoa farms exploit 284,000 child labourers: Startling new figures show an estimated 284,000 child labourers work in hazardous conditions on cocoa farms in West Africa, work that includes spraying pesticides without personal protection and clearing undergrowth with machetes.

The new survey is based on findings from four West African countries - Ghana, Ivory Coast, Cameroon and Nigeria, it was reported, Aug 26. However, out of the 284,000 believed to be employed in child labour, an overwhelming majority of them, 200 000, are based in Ivory Coast.

The surveys were conducted by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and national research collaborators in the four West African countries, under the auspices of the USAID-funded Sustainable Tree Crop Programme (STCP) and with technical support from the ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC).

In the light of recent thinking that advocates reviewing development problems from a grassroots level, researchers interviewed over 4,800 farmers, child and adult workers from 1,500 farms in 20 major cocoa producing districts, enabling them to gain a better understanding of the cultural, economic and social background of the problem, rather than just calculating the statistics. Cocoa is a big business.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Ghana, page 653:a]

IVORY COAST

a. Ten arrested over coup plot in Abidjan: A businessman and nine soldiers have been arrested for allegedly plotting to overthrow the government, Ivorian newspapers have reported.

According to four national dailies, Ibrahim Keita, the director general of Comstar, the country's third cellular phone provider was arrested, Aug 17, in his house and detained in army barracks for allegedly financing a coup attempt.

It will be recalled that on June 24, another businessman, Hamed Traore Bassam who was accused of a similar offence was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment along with a soldier, Kambire Sie, while seven others were left off the hook.

The newspapers said that only Keita's doctor has so far been allowed to see him because he is a hypertensive patient, but his lawyer, who was denied the right to have discussions with him said that no reason has so far been given for his arrest.

"I can not say why he was arrested as I have not been able to speak with him but I am sure that he does not even know the reason for his arrest, so, we are waiting to be officially told why he was arrested," the lawyer, Coma Aminata said.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Ivory Coast, page 772:b]

KENYA

a. Priests face the sack over campaigns: The Catholic Church has threatened to sack any priest implicated in campaigning for candidates during the forthcoming general election, it was reported, Aug 26.

Episcopal Conference chairman Bishop John Njue said, Aug 25, no priest will be allowed to play an active role in the campaigns. To do so, he said, would conflict with the clergy's role of serving all people without bias.

He said all priests will be expected to sensitise the people and not to influence them on whom to vote and using the pulpit to tamper with the electioneering process. Njue, however, maintained that the church will continue playing an active role in the country's political process, saying those who criticise it for doing so are not sincere. The bishop was addressing an estimated 1,800 faithful at Karatina Catholic Church.

b. Pakistani heroin trafficker jailed: A Pakistani national was sentenced to five years in jail for trafficking in heroin valued at Sh170,000, Aug 23.

Amjaid Javed was also fined Sh1 million. He was convicted by Kibera Senior Resident Magistrate Stephen Githinji. He had the drugs at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport on February 27 while on transit from Dubai to Pakistan.

In another court, a Nigerian was jailed for 10 years and fined Sh800,000 for trafficking in 215 grams of heroin valued at Sh215,000. Uche Philip was convicted by Senior Principal Magistrate Wanjiru Karanja.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

LESOTHO

a. Siemens bags large telecom contract: Siemens Telecommunications has won the largest telecommunications contract awarded in Lesotho to date.

Siemens has signed a R211m deal with the privatised operator Telecom Lesotho. Siemens will provide wireless local loop technologies to extend basic telephony services into many areas of Lesotho. The work has already begun, starting in Maseru, the capital, and surrounding areas.

The benefits of a wireless local loop system include a faster installation than networks based on copper wire, and a reduced risk of interruptions as there is no copper wire to steal.

The announcement follows the restructuring of Lesotho's telecommunications industry, and the privatisation of the former Lesotho Telecommunications Corporation. The business is jointly owned by Mountain Kingdom Communications and the Lesotho government.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

LIBYA

a. Oil Group hit by its dealings with Zimbabwe: Pretoria Tamoil, the Libyan state-owned oil company is facing bankruptcy over its dealings with Zimbabwe, industry sources said, Aug 16.

So desperate is Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe to maintain this vital source that he had handed the deeds of Zimbabwe House, the home of his country's high commission in London to Libya's leader Muammar Gaddafi as surety. Libya already owns vast tracts of land in Zimbabwe as a result of the deal.

Following the \$360m-a-year deal struck between Mugabe and Gaddafi in December 2001, Tamoil was contracted to provide 70% of Zimbabwe's 800,000 barrel a month requirement. The rest of Zimbabwe's oil came from IPG in Kuwait and overland from South Africa.

Oil industry sources said one of those suppliers, BP, would close the taps to Zimbabwe because of non-payment.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

MALAWI

a. Police search Al-Qaeda men: The Malawi police stormed a mosque in the capital Lilongwe and arrested at least 30 Asian Muslims on suspicion that they were linked to Osama Bin Laden's Al-Qaeda network.

The 30 were released unconditionally only after the police took details of two of them holding Malawian passports, it was reported, Aug 26.

One of the Muslims, Rafik Abdul Latif said the police rounded them up at the mosque at around midnight, August 15, and entered the mosque with their boots on.

"From what the police said, we suspect that the police worked on a tip from Americans who must have thought we were Al-Qaeda agents," said Latif, who described the move as harassment by the police. "There was neither a warrant of arrest nor a search warrant," he said.

Latif said, however, that the arrested Muslims were members of a group called Tabliq, whose work, he said was to bring together Muslims for Islamic teachings.

"These people spend each Thursday night at the mosque and in the morning of Fridays they get into groups that go to different people to teach," he said, pointing out that all the suspects were Malawians of either coloured or Asian origin.

b. Freelance journalist killed: Following recent attacks against journalists by Malawi's ruling United Democratic Front (UDF) party, authorities are being urged to investigate the death of a journalist in a bar recently to determine whether it was linked to his professional activities.

Reporters Without Borders (RSF) said, Aug 8, Don Kulapani was killed during a hold-up in a bar in the capital, Lilongwe, when four armed men burst into the establishment and opened fire. Kulapani was shot and stabbed several times. The assailants stole cash, musical equipment and alcohol before fleeing, RSF said.

Kulapani, a freelance journalist, was previously employed by the newspaper, *The Chronicle*. RSF said journalists working for this publication have often been the target of physical assaults in which youth members of the UDF (Young Democrats) are implicated.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Malawi, page 810:a]

MOZAMBIQUE

a. Evicted Zimbabwe farmers welcomed: White landowners who had been evicted from their farms in Zimbabwe were welcome to farm in Mozambique.

"We have a law on investment," Mozambican foreign minister Leonardo Simao said. "If someone wants to come here and invest and respects our investment laws, he is welcome. Be he or she white, black, yellow, green—if it is possible, he is welcome", it was reported, Aug 8.

Zimbabwe's government has ordered eviction of thousands of white farmers from their land, saying it is to be distributed to landless blacks, and a majority of the white farmers have expressed their desire to emigrate to neighbouring countries. The farm seizures have plunged Zimbabwe into political and economic chaos, and contributed to widespread food shortages.

While some Mozambicans have expressed fear that a large influx of Zimbabweans would create land shortages, the government believes they will bring much needed foreign investment into the country.

A project started in 2001 aims at bringing about 400 Zimbabwean farmers to Mozambique, and land has been set aside for them.

[Background Info. Mozambique, page 775:a]

b. Genetically modified food from US accepted: Mozambique, in the midst of a hunger crisis, accepted its first shipment of genetically modified food aid from the United States, Aug 7.

Mozambique had previously expressed concern about taking the modified corn because of uncertainty about how the modified corn might affect the country's agriculture if local farmers planted kernels of it. After negotiations, they agreed to accept the corn as long as it was milled immediately so it could not be planted.

Some 300,000 people in the impoverished country face starvation due to drought and massive flooding during the past two years which wiped out large swaths of cropland. And in the surrounding region, an estimated 12.8 million people in six countries in southern Africa are threatened with starvation.

About 4,500 tonnes of corn were unloaded, Aug 7, at Maputo's port and were to be processed at a nearby factory.

[Background Info. Mozambique, page 786:a]

c. Govt signs programme with UNICEF: The Mozambican government signed in Maputo, Aug 19, a new programme with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for the improvement of living conditions of children.

The programme, budgeted at 86 million US dollars, will cover the areas of education, health, nutrition, water supply, sanitation, social policies and communications, and is part of the UNICEF Master Plan in Mozambique for the period from 2002 to 2006.

The key aims of the programme are to reduce child mortality, improve health and reduce mortality among women, reduce malnutrition among new-born infants and their mothers, prevent infection by the HIV virus that causes the lethal disease AIDS, and take care of people infected and affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

The document, signed by Mozambican foreign minister Leonardo Simao and the UNICEF representative in Mozambique, Marie-Pierre Poirier, also aims at strengthening the capacity to promote, protect and enforce children's right to education, and grant them opportunities to attain their maximum potential.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg, *Statesman*, Calcutta and *Hindu*, Madras)

NIGER

a. Over 260 soldiers arrested in connection with mutiny: Order has been restored in Niger, following a recent mutiny, which led to the arrest of 268 members of the military, Prime Minister Hama Amadou said, Aug 21, in the capital, Niamey.

At least four other soldiers were at large and were being actively sought, Hama said at a meeting with NGOs, trade unions and other civil society representatives.

Those arrested include 235 from barracks in Ngouri, Nguigmi and the town of Diffa - all in the southeastern region of Diffa - where the mutiny took place. Another 33 were from the garrison in Niamey, where there was an aborted mutiny on August 4, according to the authorities. Hama deplored the death of two soldiers - one on each side - who were killed during clashes in Diffa between mutineers and loyalist troops dispatched from Niamey to put down the uprising.

The mutiny began on July 31, with the mutineers taking military and civilian officials hostage. They demanded the dismissal of the chief of general staff of the armed forces, Col Moumouni Boureima, and called for Hama to go to Diffa.

The Prime Minister said it had been nothing less than an attempt to destabilise Niger's democratic institutions.

The attempt at an insurrection in the capital was thwarted as a result of precautions taken by the government, he said, adding that the mutineers had wanted to free officers arrested in connection with the events in Diffa and put them in charge of operations. This, Hama said, showed that the "legitimacy of democratic institutions was being questioned".

Journalist arrested for reports on mutiny: The head of a private radio station in Niger, Moussa Kaka, was arrested, Aug 23, by gendarmes, news organisations quoted a colleague of the journalist as saying.

According to the radio's editor in chief, Abdoukarim Mahamadou, three gendarmes went to the offices of Radio Saraounia and took away Kaka, who is also a correspondent for Radio France International.

Mahamadou and other colleagues followed the gendarmes to their station, pleading for Kaka's release, but the officers refused, Mahamadou said.

Kaka's colleagues said his detention was tied to news reports he filed during Niger's recent mutiny. He was arrested under an August 5 presidential decree banning any news reports that could jeopardise national defence.

[Background Info. Niger, page 811:a]

b. Meningitis kills over 100 persons: At least 108 people died from meningitis in Niger in the first seven months of 2002, the directorate of epidemiological surveillance and monitoring reported.

It said the total number of cases was 4,793.

The incidence of the disease was much higher in January-July 2001, when 8,043 cases were registered and at least 614 died, the government department reported.

(SOURCE: *Post Express*, Lagos)

NIGERIA

a. Obasanjo faces impeachment: The lower house of the Nigerian Parliament has called on President Olusegun Obasanjo to resign or face impeachment proceedings.

It charged Obasanjo with "ineptitude, disregard for the rule of law and corruption", it was reported, Aug 15.

Obasanjo won election in 1999, ending 15 years of military rule in Nigeria. He is seeking a second term of office in 2003.

It's the latest in a series of moves by the country's increasingly hostile National Assembly to embarrass the President ahead of presidential elections.

The President certainly won't resign, and it's most unlikely that any impeachment debate will lead to his departure. But Obasanjo does not like such direct challenges of his leadership and this will no doubt hurt him.

It is ironic that a President with a relatively high international standing is facing such strong criticism at home. But this has much to do with the endemic corruption in the country which Obasanjo promised to tackle when he took office. It's a fact that not a single significant public official, in or out of office, has been convicted of a fraud related crime during Obasanjo's three-year tenure.

Governors mediate in political feud, army pledges loyalty: Governors of Nigeria's 36 states said, Aug 20, they were intervening in a political crisis sparked by an impeachment threat against President Olusegun Obasanjo to save the country from chaos.

The head of the military services also pledged loyalty to the President and ruled out military intervention.

The governors met Obasanjo before selecting a six-member delegation which held separate meetings with leaders of the House of Representatives, including the Speaker, Ghali Umar Na'Abba.

Speaking on behalf of his colleagues, Governor Segun Osoba of the southwestern state of Ogun said their aim was to cool rising political tempers in the country. "We do not have the mandate to interfere on either side," he told reporters in the capital, Abuja. "But at least we can break the ice and create a window for amicable resolution of the problem."

b. Islamic court sentences woman to be stoned to death: An Islamic court in Nigeria, Aug 19, confirmed a sentence of death by stoning handed down to a divorced woman for having a child out of wedlock.

To cries of "God is Great" from the public gallery, the court ruled that the execution for adultery would be carried out after Amina Lawal, 30, weans her eight-month-old daughter, Wasila, probably in two years' time.

As she wept, her team of Abuja-based lawyers said they would lodge an appeal with a higher court.

The ruling, upholding a death sentence imposed earlier, caused outrage among foreign human rights groups and is likely to re-open the bitter debate over Islamic sharia law in Nigeria.

Amnesty International said, Aug 19, the sharia codes, passed in a dozen mainly-Muslim northern Nigerian States since 2000, contradict several international human rights conventions signed by the country.

The London-based group said the codes, based on centuries-old Islamic law, discriminate in the treatment of male and female witnesses, and between Muslims and non-Muslims.

Ms Lawal, a divorcee, had no lawyer when she was sentenced to death in March by a sharia court in Bakori, in the State of Katsina.

She gave birth in January and, when charged with adultery, told the authorities the father was Yahaya Mahmud, her boyfriend of 11 months.

She said he seduced her with an offer of marriage.

The man admitted being Ms Lawal's boyfriend but was acquitted when he swore on the Koran that he was not the father.

Nevertheless, Ms Lawal was tried and convicted based on her "confession". Under sharia's rule of proof, four witnesses are required to convict a man of adultery while an unmarried woman may be condemned simply for becoming pregnant.

Ms Lawal's lawyers argued that her conviction was unfair. "This is a young woman with a child. A woman cannot be pregnant without a man, so where is that man? He deserves similar punishment. It's not fair," said Clara Obazele, a spokesperson for the women's affairs minister in the Federal government.

However, the court was unimpressed by such arguments. "Based on proofs derived through our investigations and through Islamic books I, Aliyu Abdullahi, and my three assistants hereby uphold the judgment passed by Bakori sharia court," said the chief judge in the upper sharia court.

"We uphold your conviction of death by stoning as prescribed by the sharia. This judgment will be carried out as soon as your baby is weaned". A cry of "God is great" went up the packed courtroom.

c. Three commissioners resign in Kaduna: Three commissioners in the Kaduna State Executive Council have tendered their resignation, it was reported, Aug 21.

The move was to allow them enough time to campaign and contest during the forthcoming elections.

The commissioners are, Alhaji Shehu Adamu for economic planning, Alhaji Ibrahim Lawal Nuhu, Rural and community development and John Haruna Malan, environment and natural resources.

(SOURCE: *Post Express*, Lagos, *Telegraph*, London and *Hindu*, Madras)

RWANDA

a. 'Ex-minister raped and then killed 15-year-old girl': Former Rwandan minister Eliezer Niyitegeka raped a 15-year-old Tutsi girl in his car, pushed her out of the car and shot her dead, a prosecution witness told judges at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), Aug 26.

The incident took place at Bisesero, Kibuye province, in May during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.

Niyitegeka, 50, has denied 10 charges of genocide and crimes against humanity for his alleged participation in massacres in Bisesero.

The witness -- identified only as "DAF" -- testified that Interahamwe militiamen found the girl hiding and forced her into Niyitegeka's car. The Interahamwe was the youth wing of the Movement of the Republic for National Development (MRND), the party that led a coalition government during the April-June 1994 violence.

"I saw how they made her get into the car. She was alone with Niyitegeka in the car. They stayed for about 30 minutes. I could not see what was happening in the car but I heard the militia talking and say she was being raped. After some time I saw him open the door, the girl was pushed out. She fell down beside the vehicle and Eliezer shot her," DAF told the court.

Thousands of ethnic Tutsis sought refuge in Bisesero during the genocide. An estimated 50,000 Tutsis were killed in the ensuing massacres.

'Pastor facilitated genocide': Prosecutors, Aug 20, asked judges at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda to convict Adventist Pastor Elizaphan Ntakirutimana and his son Gerard Ntakirutimana of genocide for their role in the 1994 Rwandan genocide.

Elizaphan was a senior pastor at the Mugonero complex of the Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) Church in Kibuye province and Gerald worked as a doctor in a hospital located in the complex.

They have denied seven counts of genocide and crimes against humanity. The father and son are implicated in the massacre of ethnic Tutsis who sought refuge in the complex on April 16 and other massacres at the Murambi Adventist Church.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Rwanda, page 786:a]

SOMALIA

a. IGAD foreign ministers' meeting postponed again: A meeting of the foreign ministers of Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya to discuss the Somali peace process has again been postponed.

The meeting was originally fixed for August 16, then postponed until, Aug 23, and delayed until further notice. But a source involved in the Somali reconciliation talks said, Aug 26, the meeting would not go ahead. "They will most likely meet sometime next week," he said.

The three countries, which all border Somalia, have been mandated by the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to take the lead in preparing for the Somali reconciliation conference, which is to be held in Kenya.

The delay is due mainly to logistical and time constraints. "Most of the ministers are attending the Earth Summit in Johannesburg, and therefore are not available at this time," the source said. The three countries' technical committee completed a report two weeks ago, after ending a fact-finding mission to Somalia, during which it held talks with the Transitional National Government (TNG) and other groups.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Somalia, page 787:a]

SOUTH AFRICA

a. Mbeki's call to heal rich-poor rift: The Earth Summit opened in Johannesburg, Aug 26, with a call from South African President Thabo Mbeki to heal the rift between rich and poor and end the primitive rule of "survival of the fittest".

"A global human society based on poverty for many and prosperity for a few, characterised by island of wealth, surrounded by a sea of poverty, is unsustainable," he said in an opening speech as host president of the United Nations meeting.

"There is every need for us to demonstrate to the billions of people we lead that...we do not accept that human society should be constructed on the basis of a savage principle of the survival of the fittest," Mbeki said.

On the eve of the summit, he had called for an end to "global apartheid" dividing a rich minority from the mass of the poor, saying the world needed to exercise the solidarity it had shown before in helping South African blacks end white minority rule in 1994. Referring to the mammoth, 10-day World Summit on Sustainable Development as gathering in the "cradle of humanity", he urged the thousands of delegates to adopt a "meaningful" plan. The aim is to ease poverty while avoiding poisoning the planet in the way Western industry has done over the past two centuries.

Mandela's absence saddens parallel summit: About 5,000 activists at an alternative forum parallel to the UN's Johannesburg Earth Summit waited in vain, Aug 26, for an advertised opening address by Nelson Mandela.

While the crowd danced and chanted the former South African President's clan name, Madiba, the 84-year-old Nobel peace prize winner worked quietly on a book hundreds of km away.

"Mandela is in Limpopo Province working on his book. He was not aware that he was expected at this event," his spokeswoman, Zelda la Grange, said.

In the main hall of the centre where the Global Forum is being held in parallel with the UN's summit, word spread slowly that the featured speaker would not arrive. Dozens of people streamed out after an official announced without giving a reason.

b. Winnie found guilty of perjury: South Africa's Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, former wife of Nelson Mandela, was found guilty of violating parliament's code of conduct and could face prosecution for perjury.

Winnie Mandela, a member of parliament since 1994 and president of the women's league of the ruling African National Congress, faces a severe public reprimand in parliament and the loss of 15 days' salary.

Parliament's ethics committee found she had failed to declare additional income, as required by parliamentary regulations. Fellow ANC MP Luwellyn Landers, who headed the special panel, said she could also face criminal action over the matter.

Winnie Mandela, still the darling of the ANC's poorest supporters, is currently on trial in Pretoria for fraud, facing allegations that she used the ANC's name to run a loan scam.

At a bail hearing in October 2001, she said in a sworn statement she could not pay much to guarantee her release because her living expenses already exceeded her salary as a member of parliament.

[Background Info. South Africa, page 788:b]

c. Army officers face treason charges: Three white South African army officers face charges of high treason for their part in a plot to stage a military coup and restore minority rule, police said, Aug 15.

A South African defence force colonel in the Northern Cape province, a lieutenant-colonel in Bloemfontein were among 11 Afrikaners arrested recently in an investigation into a plot to overthrow President Thabo Mbeki's government.

The other eight men appeared in Pretoria's regional court on charges of contravening South Africa's Internal Security Act, but Dries van Rensburg, a state advocate, told the court that all 11 would be charged with treason. Further arrests in different parts of the country were expected, he said.

d. AIDS claims Mandela's kin: The former President Nelson Mandela has disclosed that three of his relatives have died of AIDS, newspaper reported, Aug 25.

Mandela, who has actively promoted AIDS awareness since stepping down as President in 1999, told the *Sunday Times* newspaper that his niece and his nephew's two sons died of AIDS in the eastern Transkei region.

An estimated 4.7 million South Africans—one in nine—is HIV positive, yet the disease remains highly stigmatized among rural communities. The government has repeatedly refused to make medication available to AIDS sufferers, saying they are unaffordable and that their safety remains unproven—a position Mandela has criticised.

(SOURCE: *Statesman*, Calcutta, *Hindu*, Madras and *Telegraph*, London)

[Background Info. South Africa, page 813:a]

SUDAN

a. House arrest of opposition leader extended: Sudanese President Umar al-Bashir has extended the house arrest of the opposition leader, Hasan Abdullah al-Turabi, for one year.

No trial has taken place after 19 months in detention, it was reported, Aug 19.

"President Bashir, on the basis of Article 132 of the Constitution and Article 15 of the Law on Emergency and Public Security of 1998, has taken an extraordinary decision to extend the detention of Hasan Abdullah al-Turabi, for a renewable period of one year," the state-run Sudan News Agency said, Aug 18.

A day before the renewal, a lawyer acting on Turabi's behalf had announced that a judge of the constitutional court had ordered his release, news agencies reported.

This report was subsequently denied by the court's chairman, stating that instructions to release Turabi had never been released. The decree was issued on the basis of state-of-emergency regulations—introduced in 1999—and the Sudanese Constitution. More than 20 lawyers drawn from various opposition groups were, however, questioning its legality, and had announced that they would consider a formal challenge.

b. Thousands displaced since signing of accord: Since the signing of the landmark Machakos Protocol on July 20 between the Sudanese government and the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army, tens of thousands of people have been displaced by a government offensive in the area of the oil fields in western Upper Nile.

Speaking in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi, Aug 15, John Prendergast of the advocacy body, International Crisis Group, told reporters that tens of thousands were now stranded on the border between western Upper Nile and Bahr al-Ghazal.

Since the signing of the accord, government forces had effectively opened up a "third front" on the western side of the oil fields in an effort to clear the area of civilians and secure control over it. Previously, most of the fighting had occurred on the eastern and northern sides of the oil areas.

From the government garrison of Mankien, the villages of Tam, Buoth, Kerial, Wicok and Rier had been attacked by forces loyal to the government, including the Arab mounted militias known as the Murahilin.

Witnesses—members of the Nuer tribe—had consistently spoken of militia groups burning villages, stealing cattle, and sometimes women and children, he said. These were used as payment in kind for the militia groups, he added. Fighting on the ground had been backed by Antonov aircraft dropping bombs, and a more efficient use of helicopters than previously observed, with pilots identifying locations for ground attack.

c. Floods hit four northern states: The International Federation of Red Cross (IFRC) has sent out an urgent appeal for funds to help victims of heavy rains which hit parts of northern Sudan between Aug 3 and Aug 8, causing severe flooding and rendering thousands homeless.

In a statement released, Aug 15, the federation said floods had caused extensive damage in the northern states of Western Kordofan, White Nile, Al-Jazirah and Khartoum, where the thousands of displaced people were facing serious health risks from poor access to clean water and sanitation facilities, the statement said.

According to the federation, the area worst hit by the floods was Al-Nahud town in Western Kordofan, where at least 25,000 residents were facing severe health risks as a result of the flooding.

About 20 villages in White Nile, and 26 in Al-Jazirah had also been affected. In Khartoum state, heavy rains coupled with flash floods had hit about 126 houses in Al-Safa village, south of Omdurman, it added.

Initial surveys carried out by the authorities, the Sudanese Red Cross and Crescent Society and humanitarian organisations, found that 3,000 families in the town had completely lost their homes, while the huts of 1,933 others had been partially damaged, according to the statement. Over 600 latrines and a number of public facilities had also been affected.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SWAZILAND

a. Opposition leader acquitted: Mario Masuku, president of the People's United Democratic Movement (Pudemo), the main opposition party in Swaziland, was acquitted, Aug 22, of sedition charges after nearly a year in jail.

Speaking from Mbabane, Masuku's attorney, Paul Shilubane, said: "We are very happy. We knew from the outset that the Crown had no case. What [Masuku] had done was to criticise the government, not the king. The law allows you to do that."

Masuku was arrested in November 2000 for allegedly uttering the words "Phansi ngembuso KaMswati [Down with his Majesty King Mswati's reign]" at a bus depot in Mbabane and was charged in terms of the Sedition and Subversive Activities Act of 1938.

A long-time defender of democracy, Masuku had been living under stringent bail conditions -- he had to report to his local police station daily, was prohibited from addressing public gatherings and had to inform the high court of any intention to leave the country -- until October 2001 when he deliberately failed to report to the police and was rearrested and jailed.

During testimony recently Masuku told the high court he had had no intention of condemning the king's reign, but that he disagrees with the Swaziland government.

He said he uttered the words "Phansi ngembuso KaMswati" in the sense that the present Swaziland government was misleading the king. He added that his public statements were to call for an end to the abuse by the government of Mswati's position.

Amnesty hails acquittal: The rights group Amnesty International has welcomed a Swazi High Court acquittal of Mario Masuku on a charge of sedition.

"This acquittal, following a lengthy trial, is vindication of the accused and his right to participate in non-violent political activities. It is also confirmation of the integrity of the judicial process," Amnesty International said in a statement, Aug 22.

"Mario Masuku as well as his family suffered considerable psychological, physical and economic hardships. He was arrested in November 2000, and released under oppressive bail conditions which he endured until October 2001.

He was imprisoned later that month for breaching his bail conditions and remained in custody until his acquittal on August 22, 2002. He has on previous occasions, in the early 1990s, been detained, prosecuted and acquitted of treason and sedition," Amnesty said.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

TOGO

a. Media code draws criticism: The international press freedom watchdog, Reporters Sans Frontieres (RSF) has protested against a proposed code that would expose media professionals in Togo to heavy penalties for defaming the head of state, other government officials and top civil servants.

In a letter to Togolese Prime Minister Koffi Sama, RSF said the proposed code would stifle the independent press and showed the government's willingness to clamp down on the media.

The Paris-based organisation said it was disappointed by the government's decision which, it said, was a "sudden turnaround" in a media reform policy the Togolese authorities began in 1998 when they started decriminalising press offenses, RSF said, Aug 21.

According to RSF, the proposed bill was presented by the ministry of communication. If it is passed, journalists would face up to five years in jail and a monetary fine of up to five million CFA (about US \$7,500) for defaming the President. Under the existing code, the maximum penalty was six months. For offences against parliamentarians, the prime minister and other senior state officials, the penalties would range between three months and two years in jail.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Togo, page 814:a]

UGANDA

a. Kony declares ceasefire: Lords Resistance Army commander-in-chief Maj. Gen. Joseph Kony declared a unilateral ceasefire until further notice, Aug 24.

LRA commander Col. Sam Kolo called *Sunday Monitor* and said that Kony, who is also the chairman of the Lords Resistance Movement (LRM), had ordered all LRA soldiers inside Uganda and Sudan not attack UPDF with effect from Aug 20.

"The LRA/LRM has come out with a decision to call for a ceasefire from today midnight. We will observe this temporary ceasefire until further notice," Kolo said. The rebels have set three conditions for the ceasefire among which is that UPDF should not attack the LRA positions.

"The UPDF must not move within one kilometre of LRA positions and must not commit any act of provocation that may draw suspicion from LRA," Kolo said.

Museveni offers ceasefire: Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni had offered a conditional ceasefire to the Lord's Resistance Army in northern region.

He also named negotiators for peace talks with the rebels, a presidential spokesman said, Aug 17.

Onapito Ekolomoit said Museveni was ready to declare a one week ceasefire to permit peace talks to begin once rebel fighters assemble in designated areas, stop atrocities against civilians and cease attacking government institutions.

"The peace talks would involve many things," Ekolomoit said. "The rebels would give the reasons why they are fighting and what they want". Museveni's offer, made on a radio talks show, came as rebels stepped up attacks in northern Uganda, forcing the government to expand military operations in the region.

In March, with the agreement of the Sudanese government, the Ugandan army launched operation "Iron Fist" against LRA bases in Sudan. Despite claims that it had destroyed most of them, the army announced it was extending the operation.

UPDF kills 13 Kony rebels: Two LRA rebels were captured, Aug 16, when Uganda People's Defence Forces attacked their base in Kitgum.

The UPDF Division 4 spokesman, Lt. Paddy Ankunda, said that 13 rebels were killed and one soldier was seriously injured in the fight which lasted for about two hours at Kitgum Matidi.

Ankunda also said that the army recovered 13 sub-machine guns and one multi-purpose gun from the rebels. He said the two rebels captured will be transported and paraded before President Yoweri Museveni in Gulu. Ankunda said it was a great success and that 'Operations Iron Fist' is optimistic about bringing peace to Acholiland. He said that the presence of the Commander in Chief (President Museveni) in Gulu has given a lot of morale to the army, which has made things move faster.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi and *Hindu*, Madras)

[Background Info. Uganda, page 814:a]

ZAMBIA

a. Judge Nyangulu allows judicial review of Chiluba's immunity: The Lusaka High Court has ruled that the judicial review to determine former President Frederick Chiluba's immunity will be heard on August 30.

Passing a ruling, Aug 16, judge Anthony Nyangulu said the judicial review would be heard following the dismissal of an application by 21 members of parliament for leave to the judicial review of the lifting of Chiluba's immunity.

Judge Nyangulu noted that the application by 21 members of parliament was not made by the proper parties. "I decline to discharge the ex-parte order for leave which I granted on July 17 this year (2002) because the application has not been made by 'proper' parties - the respondent Attorney General.

"I accordingly direct that the application for review be heard and determined on its merit," he said.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Zambia, page 789:a]

ZIMBABWE

a. Mugabe dissolves cabinet over crisis: President Robert Mugabe dissolved his cabinet, Aug 23, state radio reported.

Speculation has been intense in recent weeks that Mugabe would choose new ministers to deal with the country's triple crises of economic collapse, political crisis and famine.

Legal experts said Mugabe's move came five months late, as he was constitutionally obliged to dissolve the cabinet before presidential elections in March 2003, and to have announced new ministers immediately after he was declared the winner.

Earlier, a judge ruled the government was effectively ruling illegally when he set aside the eviction order issued by a minister against a white farmer.

Finance minister sacked in reshuffle: Zimbabwe's highly regarded finance minister was sacked, along with the last white member of the cabinet, in a reshuffle that demonstrated President Mugabe's determination to remove all opposition to his rule.

Simba Makoni, 52, an urbane, independent-minded economist in the cabinet and Timothy Stamps, the health minister, who has not fully recovered from a stroke, were the only two ministers to be dropped, it was reported, Aug 26.

Mugabe elevated, relegated and moved sideways a clutch of ministers in a bloated cabinet of 53 people that now include a deputy minister of small and medium-sized enterprises development. John Nkomo, the chairman of the ruling Zanu party, apparently fell victim to party infighting when he was demoted to the amorphous job of minister of special affairs in the President's office.

Significantly, Mugabe kept the mostly unelected militant politicians nicknamed the "gang of four": Jonathan Moyo, the propaganda minister, Joseph Made, the lands minister, Patrick Chinamasa, the justice minister, who has presided over the dismantling of the independent judiciary; and Elliot Manyika, the youth minister, who controls a young, violent militia that intimidates the populace.

The sacking of Makoni has rid Mugabe's cabinet of any semblance of international respectability. He leaves after two years of watching his plans for economic reform being rejected for Mugabe's failed state controls.

He was seen as the only person in the government capable of inspiring confidence among foreign investors, who are desperately needed to assist the country's devastated economy.

In July Mugabe denounced as "saboteurs" and "enemies" those who advocated currency devaluation, and implied attack on Makoni, who had done so.

133 white farmers held: Ignoring court orders and Western condemnation, the government, Aug 18, stepped up its efforts to seize white-owned land and rounded up more farmers defying evictions notices.

A total of 133 farmers who failed to heed an August 9 deadline to leave their farms had been arrested since Aug 16, said Andrew Phiri, a police spokesman. There would be "no favour or compromise" for those who broke the government's land redistribution laws, he said.

The government plans to seize nearly 5,000 white-owned farms, saying they are to be distributed to landless blacks. About 60 per cent of the 2,900 farmers ordered off their land have not yet complied, said Jenni Williams, a spokeswoman for a farmers' pressure group, Justice for Agriculture.

White farmers give in to psychological war: After nearly two-and-a-half years of sustained psychological attrition, Vince Schultz, 57, and his wife, Monica, 58, were finally ready, Aug 22, to walk off their farm with nothing but a suitcase of clothing and a few sticks of furniture.

"I just want peace," he said in a neighbours' dining room, Aug 22, in the prosperous Banket commercial farming district about 100 km north of Harare.

"Twenty-nine months of this is enough. I am a quivering wreck. My ticker is going to stop just now. I just want to go somewhere I can lead a normal life".

Schultz was one of nearly 200 white farmers arrested in the wake of an August 9 deadline to abandon their homes in terms of eviction orders issued to about 2,900 farmers under President Robert Mugabe's land reform programme.

Like about 60 per cent of them, Schultz decided to stay, because legal advice told them the orders were illegal. In Schultz's case, he had a high court order to back him up.

His "section eight" orders in terms of the land-seizure legislation were declared "invalid and of no force or effect" by a judge. The police constable who arrested him, Aug 18, for "defying" the eviction order ignored the court ruling. "He said he had instructions to arrest me, and that was that," Schultz said.

In court, Aug 19, a magistrate in a nearby town discharged him on the strength of the judge's order. Bright Matonga, a former state propaganda official who now runs the ailing state-run bus company, was on Schultz's doorstep within a half hour after his wife brought him home from the court.

(SOURCE: *Independent*, Harare, *Hindu*, Madras, *Asian Age*, New Delhi, and *Statesman*, Calcutta)

Final resting spot for Sarah Baartman

The late winter sun bore down on the mountainous hamlet but Phumla Nyanda couldn't shake the chill in her bones, shivering as she watched Sarah Baartman's pine coffin lowered into a grave, 186 years after her death. Nyanda pulled her sweater close to her body, crossed her arms and wept.

"I always think of her being so cold when she died, so far from home, so alone, in this cold, strange place", Nyanda said. "I always wonder what humiliation she must have been feeling when the Europeans would file by her in her cage and stare at her nakedness. Couldn't they see she was a woman and not some animal, not some rabid beast? She must have been so cold when she died".

They buried Saartjie Baartman, known as Sarah Friday, Aug 9, in a solemn ceremony on a small hill overlooking Hankey, a town on the Gamtoos River in South Africa where she was born 213 years ago. She died in 1816, a pauper and a prostitute, a circus sideshow. She has been sold to a British Marine surgeon who saw in her protruding derriere that was characteristic of her Khoisan tribe some proof of whites' racial superiority. He took her to London and put her in a cage for all the world to see.

Things only got worse. The surgeon sold her to an animal trainer, who took her to France. She was put on display in Paris, where gawkers sized up her nude form and named her the "Hottentot Venus".

Even in death, her humiliation did not end; a surgeon made a cast of her body, dissected her and stored her brain and genitals in bottles of formaldehyde. The painted plaster cast of Baartman's body was displayed in Paris' Musee de l'Homme until 1974. The French government returned her remains in May, and hundreds of South Africans attended Friday's ceremony in

Hankey, about 470 miles east of Cape Town in South Africa's Eastern Cape region. The funeral coincided with Women's Day, a South African public holiday, and with its tribal rituals and soaring elegies, the interment was intended to redeem a daughter lost to a continent that grieves both for her suffering and its own.

"The story of Sarah Baartman is the story of the African people," President Thabo Mbeki said at the funeral. "It is the story of the loss of our ancient freedom...It is the story of our reduction to the state of objects who could be owned, used and discarded by others".

The funeral Friday paid tribute not only to Baartman but to the tribe to which she belonged, the Khoisan, indigenous hunters commonly known as bushmen. The Dutch and British settlers who arrived in Africa more than 400 years ago typically regarded the Khoisan as savages, forcing them from their land and slaughtering them en masse. Baartman's remains were clothed in traditional garb and purified with herbs that were set alight in keeping with Khoisan custom. Two aloe wreaths adorned her coffin, and Mbeki announced that her gravesite would become a national landmark.

"I hear the cry of Sarah Baartman," said Willa Boezak, a South African poet who lobbied the French government for the release of Baartman's remains. "Her soul cries out with relief that at last the pain and humiliation are gone". According to African traditions, her soul would remain trapped in her earthly remains until she was properly buried in the place of her birth. Now, finally, she is free.

—Jon Jeter, *Washington Post*, published in *Deccan Herald*, Aug 2002)

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ANGOLA

a. WFP to feed former rebels: The World Food Programme (WFP) has announced that, beginning September, it would provide food aid to former rebel UNITA soldiers in Angola.

Their families have already been receiving food rations since June, WFP said in a statement, Sept 9.

"The demobilisation of the UNITA soldiers is now complete and most of the 80,000 men will need assistance until they are fully reintegrated into society.

Although the Angolan government was responsible for feeding them until October, there are claims that these ex-fighters are experiencing difficulties - due to lack of food and medicines," WFP said.

WFP warned that food "buffer stocks" of 51,000 mt needed to be delivered and pre-positioned in strategic locations during the coming weeks, "before the rains make access impossible".

Of that, 7,500 mt will cover the ex-UNITA reception areas. "Various supporting activities are taking place, such as building or repairing storage facilities and reviewing transport contracts to cope with the additional trucking requirements.

[Background Info. Angola, page 805:a]

b. Giant Sable antelope not extinct: Fears that Angola's Giant Sable antelope was extinct had been proved groundless, according to a Pretoria academic.

Pretoria University's Centre for Wildlife Management, the Kissama Foundation of Angola and the Augustinho Neto University in Luanda, undertook the special survey in August, it was reported, Aug 30.

Professor Wouter van Hoven of the Centre for Wildlife Management said in a statement that interviews with locals in the area revealed that Giant Sable antelopes were often sighted in the Luanda Reserve.

The expedition then started with ground surveys on foot in the Cangandala National Park. That proved to be the right decision, and three separate sightings of Giant Sable antelope were recorded", he said.

The first sighting was of two adult bulls, followed by a single adult bull and a third sighting of two sub-adults, Van Hoven said. Many tracks as well as dung, including those of adults and juveniles, were also found in the area.

(SOURCE: *Namibian*, Windhoek)

BURUNDI

a. Ceasefire agreement with rebel group: Burundi government officials and leaders of one of the rebel groups in the country, Aug 26, signed a draft ceasefire agreement after a week of peace negotiations in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania.

Jacob Zuma, Deputy President of South Africa, chaired the talks, which were aimed at ending nine years of civil war in Burundi. Colonel Jean-Bosco Ndayikengurukiye, leader of the Forces for Defence of Democracy (CNDD-FDD), and Amroise Niyonsaba, Burundi presidential advisor, signed the draft ceasefire agreement on behalf of their two parties. Zuma described the agreement as "an encouraging step towards peace in Burundi."

"It gives concrete hope to the Burundian people and Africa," Zuma told reporters shortly before he left for South Africa.

[Background Info. Burundi, page 807:a]

b. At least 40 killed in rebel attack: At least 30 rebels, eight civilians and two government soldiers died when Hutu rebels of the Forces Nationales de Liberation attacked the northern outskirts of the capital, Bujumbura, Aug 25, interior minister Salvador Ntihakabose said.

"These figures will certainly be greater as our investigations progress," he said in Bujumbura. He said five of the civilians were killed when a grenade exploded in their home, and the other three died after being hit by stray bullets. The army repulsed the rebels, but the combat zone remained inaccessible until August 26 morning.

Two soldiers of the South African Protection Support Detachment were among the wounded when the rebels lobbed 60-mm mortar rounds into the northern Bujumbura suburbs of Mutanga and Gihosha. The South Africans are members of a 701-strong force protecting prominent Hutu politicians who returned from exile to participate in the transitional power-sharing government, inaugurated November 1, 2001, and to work in state institutions.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

a. Former President Kolingba, 21 others sentenced to death: The National Criminal Court, Aug 26, sentenced former President Andre Kolingba and 21 associates - including his three sons - to death for masterminding the failed coup of May 28, 2001.

They were sentenced in absentia after being charged with undermining state security, assassination and destruction of property. Kolingba ruled from 1981 to 1993 before being ousted in multiparty elections by current President Ange-Felix Patasse. Then Kolingba fled the country. His current whereabouts remain unknown.

An additional 10 people deemed to have been accomplices were sentenced to 20 years hard labour, while a third category, comprising about 600 deserting soldiers, also received 10-year sentences with hard labour. The president of the National Criminal Court said the state would confiscate the properties of the convicts.

One of the lawyers defending some of the accused, Andre-Olivier Manguereka, said, Aug 26, that the death sentence was no longer applied in the CAR. "The death sentence has not been applied since 1983," he said. "Courts pronounce it, but it is never carried out."

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Central African Republic, page 807:a]

CONGO

a. Human rights NGOs form a federation: A number of human rights organisations in the Republic of Congo (ROC) have formed a coalition with the objective of bringing about closer collaboration in their efforts to promote democracy, good governance, and human rights in the country, according to a communique from the government, Aug 29.

Speaking in the capital, Brazzaville, recently at a ceremony to launch the Federation Congolaise des Droits de l'homme (Fecodho), its president, Cephass Germain Ewangui, a former vice-president of the national electoral commission, said: "The work of the Federation will not consist of disseminating inflammatory pamphlets or declarations against public authorities; rather, it will focus on providing a deeper analysis of the strengths and weaknesses in the domain of human rights and democracy with a view towards a campaign focused on community education and the support, promotion and development of a culture for respect of human rights and basic liberties.

"The protection of citizens against abuse by state authorities will equally be a subject of concern for Fecodho."

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

CONGO (DR)

a. Human rights minister freed: Luaba Ntumba, the human rights minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and his delegation were released, Sept 1, following three days of detention by an ethnic Hema militia near the northeastern city of Bunia.

Accompanying Ntumba were Thomas Lubanga, the leader of the Union des Patriotes Congolais—a splinter faction of the

rebel Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie-Kisangani-Mouvement de Liberation (RCD-K-ML), Lola Bile, Ntumba's press officer, and Nicaise Kibelbel, editor of *Les Couloirs* newspaper. The four were taken hostage, Aug 29, and held in Madro, some 12 km outside Bunia.

"We spent three nights seated on a sofa, refusing to eat what they offered us, preferring to eat sugar biscuits," said Ntumba on return to the DRC capital, Kinshasa, Sept 1. "We were not harmed physically, but we were subjected to major psychological duress," he added, noting that everyone in the delegation was safe and sound.

The release of the hostages followed the intervention of Ugandan government officials who travelled to Bunia to negotiate with leaders of the Hema militia, known as the Front pour la Reconciliation et la Paix (FRP), who are opposed to the RCD-K-ML of Mbusa Nyamwisi.

b. Zimbabwe begins troop withdrawal: The UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (known as MONUC) confirmed, Sept 5, that Zimbabwean troops have begun their withdrawal from the country, with 150 soldiers leaving Mbandaka, western DRC, Sept 4.

Three battalions of around 2,400 soldiers remained scattered among the cities of Boende, Bolomba, Mbandaka and Buburu, in Equateur province, MONUC said in a statement.

The Zimbabwean army - which has been fighting alongside government forces against rebel groups for the last four years - began withdrawing its equipment and a small contingent of troops on September 3 from Kananga, in the province of Kasai-Occidental.

The withdrawals are in line with the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and various Security Council resolutions demanding the pullout of all foreign forces from Congolese territory.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

DJIBOUTI

a. Multi-party politics approved: Djibouti President Ismael Omar Guelleh has announced the introduction of multi-party politics to coincide with the 10th anniversary of the country's constitution on September 4.

In a speech to mark the occasion, the President hailed the achievements of the Djibouti people over the last 10 years. He described the 10th anniversary as a "new departure" for the country.

"In keeping with this law on which our republican institutions are based, our people will, from today (September 4), participate in the process of multiparty politics," he said, according to the Djibouti news agency (ADI).

He cautioned against tribalism, regionalism, demagoguery, disrespect for constitutional rule and violence.

Djibouti was a one-party state when it gained independence from France in 1977, with the ruling Popular Rally for Progress

(PRP) governing the country. In 1992, a law was passed allowing the registration of three more parties. Now, all parties will be recognised, subject to approval by the interior ministry.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

EGYPT

a. Military court convicts 51 militants: A military court found 51 men guilty and punished them with sentences ranging from two to 15 years in one of Egypt's biggest Islamic militancy cases in years.

In all, 94 men had been charged in the case. The main defendants were charged with founding an illegal group that planned to assassinate President Hosni Mubarak and other public figures and to attack government institutions, it was reported, Sept 9.

Others were accused of belonging to the group, possessing explosives and ammunition, raising funds without authorization for Muslim rebels in Chechnya and Hamas militants in the Palestinian territories and receiving overseas military training without government authorization.

Prosecutors dubbed the group al-Wa'ad—or "the promise"—and said it was a new militant organisation.

Defence lawyers said their clients were first accused of the illegal fund-raising for Muslim fighters and that the more serious charges were added only after Sept 11.

(SOURCE: *Statesman*, Calcutta)

ERITREA

a. Annan recommends extension of UNMEE mandate: UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan has recommended that the mandate of the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) be extended by six months, it was reported, Sept 5.

In his latest progress report to the Security Council on the two countries, he said the peacekeeping force was committed to playing its role throughout the border demarcation process and contributing to stability on the ground.

For this reason, he recommended an extension of the mandate until March 15, 2003. UNMEE's current mandate expires on September 15, 2002. Annan urged the two governments "to continue to display statesmanship" during the demarcation phase, noting that the armies of both countries had maintained a "relatively good level of cooperation" with UNMEE.

However during recent months there has been an increase in the number of incidents and subsequent accusations and counter-accusations by the parties. There were incidents of abduction of local populations on both sides of the southern boundary, he said.

[Background Info. Eritrea, page 819:a]

b. Ambassador to Sudan defects: Eritrea's Ambassador to Sudan, Abdella Adem, has left his post and fled to Europe, Shaebia website reported, Sept 6.

It said the move comes two weeks after he was recalled to Asmara by the foreign ministry.

"Abdella told his colleagues in the Eritrean Embassy in Khartoum that he was driving to Eritrea but then boarded a plane to Europe," Shaebia said.

Informed sources said that Abdella was a long-serving member of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) and was one of the EPLF's elected leaders in 1977.

He had been serving in Sudan for nearly two years and was said to have sympathies with the group of 11 government dissidents currently detained by the Eritrean authorities.

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

ETHIOPIA

a. ADF loan for water project: The African Development Fund (ADF), a soft-loan arm of the African Development Bank (ADB), has approved US \$27.78 million in loans and grants to finance a water supply and sanitation project in Harar, eastern Ethiopia, it was reported, Sept 5.

The project includes boosting water production and distribution, as well as a public education campaign on water and health.

The effort is part of a four-and-a-half-year programme, starting in 2003, aimed at high-density low-income areas, an ADF statement said.

"The objective of the project is to provide better access to water supply and sanitation services to the population of Harar, Alemaya, Awudai, Adele and Dengego through improved water production, distribution and sanitation," the statement said.

The project will contribute towards poverty reduction and stimulating economic growth.

"By providing water in quantity, reliability, accessibility, quality and affordable cost, the project will reduce the time spent to collect water as well as the incidence of water-borne and water-washed diseases and the cost of their treatment," the ADF said. It would also stimulate prospects for economic development by attracting industrial and commercial activities to the area and by creating jobs, the statement said.

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

GUINEA BISSAU

a. Bishops appeal for action to salvage the country: Two Catholic bishops in Guinea-Bissau have appealed to politicians in the country to take urgent steps to "salvage the nation from plunging into an abyss".

In a statement published by the Missionary Service News Agency (MISNA), Sept 6, the Bishop of Bissau, Jose Camnate

Na Bissign, and his Bafata counterpart, Pedro Carlos Zilli, said the first emergency to be confronted in Guinea-Bissau was political crisis.

"If not resolved, the clouds of a new internal conflict will quickly collect", they warned.

"At the end of the war in 1998-'99 we all believed that reconciliation in the nation was possible and, with international aid and foreign investments, it would be possible to reach a satisfactory economic level, entering a phase of real development. But this never occurred," the prelates said.

They blamed the current situation on a lack of government action, frequent leadership changes and a succession of ministers and judges, failure to draft a new constitution approved by the national assembly, and human rights violations, among other factors.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

KENYA

a. Moi sacks Vice President: Kenyan President Daniel arap Moi, Aug 30, fired his long serving deputy, Professor George Saitoti, in a move seen to be linked to wrangles within the ruling party over who will be the presidential candidate in forthcoming elections.

Saitoti, who has been Kenya's Vice President for the last 13 years, recently publicly disagreed with Moi's choice of Uhuru Kenyatta - son of Kenya's founding President Jomo Kenyatta - as the preferred successor. Saitoti subsequently announced his intention to stand for election.

A statement aired on Kenyan radio announced that Moi had "relieved" Saitoti of his vice-presidential post and his home affairs portfolio. William Ruto, an assistant minister in the office of the President and prominent Moi supporter, was appointed home affairs minister. However, the vice-presidency was left vacant.

Moi is expected to retire after completing his second five-year term in office in 2002 as he is constitutionally barred from standing for a third term. A political observer said, Aug 30, that Saitoti's sacking was "not shocking" and was in line with Moi's history of leadership.

"Moi has never outlived the mentality that doesn't tolerate dissent. I would have been surprised if he had failed to sack him [Saitoti]," Opiata Odindo, spokesman for Kituo Cha Sheria [Kiswahili for Legal Aid Centre], said.

[Background Info. Kenya, page 809:a]

b. 20 houses set on fire as rustlers raid village: At least 20 houses were burnt by livestock rustlers in a fresh spate of violence in Isiolo district, it was reported, Sept 8.

Tension was high after four days of fighting.

The raiders, armed with rifles, struck at 4 am, burning stores and destroying a water tank in the dry Ngabela area, near the Isiolo/Meru North border. No injuries were reported.

More than 200 people have fled their homes and are camping at the local district headquarters.

The attack occurred despite an earlier assurance by police in the bandit-prone district that security had been beefed up, and an appeal to those displaced to return to their homes.

Some of the people had fled their homes after being warned of an impending attack. Police from the neighbouring Meru North and Central districts were brought in to help track down the raiders.

c. 5,000 teachers boycott classes: Confusion marred the opening of schools in some parts of the country as teachers agitated for the implementation of the award relating to their salary.

In Kisii, nearly 5,000 staff boycotted work and held a peaceful demonstration in the town, demanding the implementation of the remaining phases of the 1997 pay award. They were joined by some pupils. They also protested at the death of a colleague, Kiragori Nyangoto, two weeks after he was arrested by police.

In Nyamira, some teachers stayed away from school and conversed in groups as they waited for word from union officials.

Branch secretary Richard Kibagendi, who visited a number of schools, said teachers were demoralised and would not go to work.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

LIBERIA

a. Civil society groups call for ceasefire: A consortium of 50 Liberian civil society groups have called for a ceasefire in the fighting between government soldiers and rebels in north and northwestern Liberia.

The group, calling itself the Civil Society Movement of Liberia (CSML), Aug 30, urged the deployment in Liberia of a peacekeeping force led by the United Nations or the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to enforce such a ceasefire. The CSML also appealed to President Charles Taylor to lift the state of emergency in the country and withdraw armed men from the streets of Monrovia in order to reduce tension there. Security in the capital city has been tightened in recent weeks, with presidential troops manning roadblocks at street corners and on rooftops.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

LIBYA

a. Libya no longer a rogue state, says Gaddafi: Libya will no longer be a rogue state as it used to be, the Libyan leader, Moammar Gaddafi said, Aug 31.

In future, Libya will merge its foreign policy with that of the African Union and will follow an African line on relations with the United States and Israel, Col Gaddafi said in a long speech marking the anniversary of the 1969 coup in which he took power.

"Now, no one can say Libya is a rogue state. There is no Libyan policy. This is an African policy....which represents Libya and Lesotho (alike)", Col Gaddafi said, referring to a country at the far side of the African continent.

"If any country now snubs Libya, then it snubs the whole of Africa," he said to a crowd of several thousands in the south Libyan city of Sibha.

"In the old days, they called us a rogue state. They were right in accusing us of that. In the old days, we had a revolutionary behaviour.... We acted like an independent state and we put up with the consequences of our action".

Libya acquired the reputation of a rouge for its hosting of terrorist organisations, such as that of Abu Nidal, the Palestinian militant who died of a gunshot wound in Iraq. It was implicated in the blowing up of an American airliner over the Scottish town of Lockerbie in 1988 and the bombing of a West Berlin discotheque in 1986.

It remains on the US State Department list of countries that support terrorism.

"We are no longer rogues of the African Union, therefore this accusation is null," Col Gaddafi said, in a speech broadcast on Libyan state television and monitored in Cairo.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, New Delhi)

[Background Info. Libya, page 810:a]

MALAGASY

a. Ravalomanana gets UN nod of approval: The presence of Madagascar's new President, Marc Ravalomanana, at the Earth Summit in South Africa recently is likely to put further pressure on African countries to reconsider their relations with Malagasy.

Ravalomanana arrived in South Africa, Sept 1, at the invitation of the United Nations, to attend the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg. Malagasy officials said the invitation was tacit recognition of the island's new leader.

"This is a milestone in President Ravalomanana's international acceptance. There is no doubt that he is now considered the legitimate ruler of Malagasy, consul-general in South Africa, Bruno Ranarivelo, said.

Ranarivelo said that Ravalomanana was expected to hold talks with world leaders and top government officials at the summit, including South African President Thabo Mbeki, and US Secretary of State Colin Powell.

"A number of issues will be discussed, mainly dealing with rebuilding the economy and re-establishing political ties," he added.

[Background Info. Malagasy, page 774:a]

b. 670 die of flu: More than 670 people have died and 22,000 have been affected by a severe strain of flu in Malagasy, it was reported, Aug 29.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) said, Aug 28, only the province of Antsiranana in the northeast remained unaffected. The epidemic, which was first reported in June, has been particularly virulent in the poorest province, Fianarantsoa, where 556 people have died.

But officials denied the epidemic was out of control, saying that the increase in the number of reported deaths in recent days was due to improved monitoring of the situation by health officials. Two weeks ago the death toll stood at 374.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MOROCCO

a. Amnesty calls for information on missing persons: Amnesty International urged Moroccan authorities, Aug 29, to end the "suffering of hundreds of Moroccans and Sahrawis still awaiting news of relatives who disappeared at the hands of security forces in previous decades".

"It is cruel and inhuman that a woman whose husband was arrested in front of her during the 1960s or 1970s should still be trying to obtain an answer from the authorities on whether he continues to be held in secret detention or was tortured to death," the organisation said in a news release.

"It is high time those answers were given," it added in a release marking the the International Day of the 'Disappeared'.

The organisation, however, welcomed initiatives undertaken by the Moroccan authorities in recent years to improve the human rights situation, including the establishment by King Mohamed VI in July 2000 of an arbitration commission to decide compensation for material and psychological damage suffered by victims of "disappearance" and their families.

Compensation has so far been awarded in several hundred cases, "however, there can be no substitute for truth and justice", the organisation said.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Morocco, page 811:a]

MOZAMBIQUE

a. Kofi Annan in Maputo: The U N Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, arrived in Maputo, Aug 29, at the invitation of Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano.

On his arrival at Maputo International Airport, Annan was welcomed by Chissano, other members of the government and members of the diplomatic corps.

After laying a wreath at the Monument to the Mozambican Heroes, where the founder of Frelimo, Eduardo Mondlane, and the country's first president, Samora Machel, are buried, Annan was received at the City Hall by Maputo Mayor Artur Canaã, who symbolically offered him the keys to the city.

According to a press release from Chissano's office, Annan's visit is to "assess and strengthen the UN's work for the consolidation of peace and development in the country".

During his visit, Annan met Chissano to discuss the political, economic and social situation in Mozambique, and the latest developments in Southern Africa, and elsewhere.

b. Chissano praises Blair for debt cancellation: Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano has praised the British government for the leading role it has taken on debt cancellation.

Speaking at a joint press conference with visiting British Prime Minister Tony Blair, Aug 31, Chissano said that Britain's cancellation of Mozambique's debts "sets a good example for others".

The money released by debt cancellation "has allowed us to develop our social sectors", he added.

Chissano also praised the work of the British company Crown Agents, which has been helping reorganise the Mozambican customs service, and the humanitarian efforts of British NGOs such as Oxfam and the Save the Children Fund.

Blair said that relations between the two countries "have strengthened enormously in the past four years" and that Britain was now the second largest investor in Mozambique.

c. Cardoso killer escapes from prison: Justice Minister Jose Abudo, Sept 9, blamed "men's weakness" for the escape from prison of Anibal Antonio dos Santos, Junior (better known as "Anibalzinho"), one of the six men charged with murdering the country's best known journalist, Carlos Cardoso.

Security had been stepped up in the prison, said Abudo, but thanks to "the weakness" of some people, Anibalzinho still managed to escape.

"It's a problem with some men", he said. "While some wanted him to stay in prison until the trial, others interfered in order to allow his escape".

Abudo said other countries also had problems with prison escapes. In Mozambique, an attempt had been made to prevent such incidents, he said.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Mozambique, page 369:a]

NIGER

a. Second journalist arrested over mutiny reports: A second journalist, Boulama Ligari, has been arrested in connection with news coverage of the recent army mutiny in Niger.

He was being detained by the gendarmerie, sources said, Aug 28.

Ligari's arrest followed that of Moussa Kaka, Aug 23, by gendarmes. Kaka heads a private radio station, Radio Saracounia.

Reporters Sans Frontieres, a group which campaigns to defend press freedoms and is demanding Ligari's release, said that the journalist had been transferred to the prison in Diffa, where he was being held. Diffa is 1,500 km east of the capital, Niamey.

"He has not been charged yet," an RSF official said.

According to his colleagues and local sources, Ligari, who also worked for the private Radio Anfani, was arrested for mutiny-related reports he filed through the station.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Niger, page 822:a]

NIGERIA

a. Central Bank tackles money laundering: The Central Bank of Nigeria has given local banks until the end of September to clean up their acts or face severe sanctions, it was reported, Aug 29.

Director of banking supervision Ignatius Imala said the central bank was concerned about the problem and was taking it "very seriously" because Nigeria was on the "non-cooperating countries" list of the international Financial Action Task Force, an independent body combating money laundering.

Imala said the task force had given Nigeria until October to correct the problem or risk serious trouble. But he did not mention the nature of the trouble or the action to be taken against errant banks.

He said the central bank had directed all the local banks in the country to improve on their operations, in addition to having "good knowledge" of their clients and customers.

Nigeria's more than 90 local banks are required to notify the central bank of any lodgement in foreign currency in excess of \$1,000 by any single individual or \$20,000 by a corporate body.

b. Prisoners to be disenfranchised: Hundreds of thousands of prison inmates and sick people in hospitals may be disenfranchised as there is no provision to register them, an official said, Sept 9.

The review of the register will run from September 12 to 22, a spokesman of the Independent National Electoral Commission, Segun Adeogun, said, according to state-run Radio Nigeria.

The commission does not have the funds, the logistics and the time needed to extend the exercise to the prison inmates and those hospitalised, said the official.

However, he said, that anybody in these groups who presents himself for registration in the officially designated centres will be listed.

The voters' register is one of the key missing elements in groundwork ahead of Nigeria's first elections since the return of civilian rule in 1999.

All Nigerians who are at least 18 years old will be eligible to sign up during the 10 days of registration, to take place in 120,000 registration centres, officials said.

Experts estimate that Nigeria, Africa's most populous country, is home to more than 120 million people. INEC has set itself a target of registering 60 million voters.

[Background Info. Nigeria, page

c. Two lovers to die by stoning: An Islamic court in the northern Nigerian state has sentenced two lovers to death by stoning for adultery, state officials said, Aug 29.

Thirty-two-year-old Ahmadu Ibrahim and his lover Fatima Usman were, Aug 26, found guilty of having sex outside marriage by the Upper Sharia court sitting at New Gawu district, a justice ministry official said.

The official said offence is contrary to Islamic law, or Sharia, which was reintroduced in the state in 2000. He said the two lovers had confessed to the crime and have 30 days to appeal the sentence.

The latest sentence of death by stoning is the third to be pronounced in August under the Sharia, which is in operation in 12 northern Nigerian states.

(SOURCE: *Post Express*, Lagos and *Deccan Herald*, Bangalore)

[Background Info. Nigeria, page 823:b]

RWANDA

a. 'Military Trial I' begins: The highest-profile case before the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), the so-called "Military Trial I," resumed, Sept 2, five months after it was adjourned.

The prosecution alleges that one of the four defendants in the trial, Colonel Theoneste Bagosora, 61, was the mastermind of the April-June 1994 genocide in Rwanda.

Bagosora served as director of cabinet in the Rwandan ministry of defence in 1994. He was arrested on March 9, 1996 in Cameroon and transferred to the United Nations Detention Facility (UNDF) in Arusha on January 23, 1997.

The other defendants are Brigadier-General Gratien Kabiligi, Colonel Anatole Nsengiyumva and Major Aloys Ntabakuze. Nsengiyumva, 52, was commander of military operations in Gisenyi Province between 1993 and 1994.

He is also former chief of military intelligence in the Rwandan army. Kabiligi, 51, was chief of military operations in the Rwandan army during the genocide.

Ntabakuze, 48, was a commander of the para-commando battalion of the Rwandan army in 1994.

b. Two suspected killers of UN peacekeepers in Kigali jail: Two Rwandan former soldiers suspected of killing 10 Belgian UN peacekeepers have been found in a Kigali prison, the Belgian daily *Le Soir* reported, Aug 30.

Citing information uncovered by Belgian newspapers *Derniere Heure* and *Het Volk*, *Le Soir* reported that one suspect was an unnamed low-ranking soldier of the ex-FAR, Rwanda's former army, while the other was Cpl Alphonse Twahirwa, who was accused specifically of killing a Belgian lieutenant.

The suspects have already testified before Belgian Judge Damien Van der Meersch, who is due to lead another mission to Rwanda to continue inquiries into the killings.

A third former Rwandan soldier, Maj Bernard Ntuyaga, who is also sought in connection with the killings, is being held in a prison in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. *Le Soir* reported that Ntuyaga told the Belgian soldiers that their lives would be spared if they laid down their arms.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Rwanda, page 823:a]

SOMALIA

a. Abducted UN employee freed: A UN employee who was abducted in the Somali capital, Mogadishu, was freed, Sept 4.

The office of the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia welcomed the release of Muhammad Farah Omar, who works for the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

It said he was set free "when factional fighting broke out in north Mogadishu near the building where he was being held, close to the Lafweyne Hotel".

"His captors fled and Omar was freed along with five other Somalis who had been abducted and held there," UN statement said.

"Omar was taken for safekeeping to the UN compound, then checked by a UN medical officer and returned to his family."

Maxwell Gaylard, the UN Resident & Humanitarian Coordinator said "this appalling wave of criminal abductions" was not just affecting UN staff.

"There are reports that many more ordinary Somalis have also been kidnapped, including children," the statement quoted him as saying.

b. Over 15 killed in Mogadishu fighting: At least 15 people were killed and over 30 wounded in two days of fighting in the north of Mogadishu, a local journalist said, Sept 4.

The fighting, in the districts of Karaan and Yaqshiid, broke out, Sept 3, when militia of the Warsangeli subclan attacked militia forces belonging to the Agon-Yar subclan. Both groups belong to the main Abgal clan. The fighting, which subsided later resumed, Sept 4.

The fighting which was initially confined to the Fagah road junction area has reportedly spread to all parts of Yaqshiid and Karaan, a Mogadishu resident, Awil Hashi, said.

"We had a lull yesterday, but it is intensifying today," he said, Sept 4.

"This fighting is a continuation of earlier fighting between the two sides in Mogadishu in May," he added.

c. Editor imprisoned in Somaliland: A court in Hargeysa, the capital of the self-declared republic of Somaliland, has sentenced a newspaper editor to four months' imprisonment, according to official Radio Hargeysa.

Abdirahman Isma'il Umar, the editor of the Hargeysa-based daily newspaper *Wartire*, had been found guilty of "misreporting", the radio said, Aug 28. The Somaliland attorney-general had accused the editor of "fabrications and baseless reports".

A humanitarian source in Hargeysa said the paper had published an article claiming that Somaliland President Dahir Riyale Kahin had, during a recent visit to Djibouti, signed a secret pact with Djibouti President Ismael Omar Gelleh.

According to Radio Hargeysa, "this was found to have been a fabrication and an example of irresponsible journalism".

The opposition Party SAHAN issued a statement, Aug 29, condemning the imprisonment of the journalist, and called upon the president of Somaliland not to encourage the suppression of press freedoms, the source said.

d. Drugs destroyed in Mogadishu: Somalia's Transitional National Government (TNG) has destroyed a consignment of drugs weighing about 1,000 kg, the police chief said, Aug 27.

Abdi Hasan Awale Qeybdiid said the drugs were burned in public in front of the police academy, Aug 24. The event was attended by senior TNG officials, including President Abdiqassim Salad Hassan.

The drugs, mostly cannabis, had been seized in special operations over the past few months by anti-narcotics police. "We have so far detained 280 people on drugs charges," Qeybdiid said.

He added that the drug was found mostly in the regions of Lower Shabelle, Middle Shabelle, Shabelle, Lower Juba, Middle Juba and some districts of the capital. "We also seized about 40 kg of cannabis seed from India," he said.

According to Qeybdiid, drug abuse and trafficking had become rampant in the country which was why he had set up a special task force to fight the menace.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SOUTH AFRICA

a. Taxpayers to foot bigger share of summit bill: South African taxpayers are likely to foot the lion's share of the R550-million bill for the recent World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), a newspaper reported, Sept 8.

The Rapport said ministers recently dodged all questions surrounding the cost of the WSSD, claiming it could only be assessed once a final audit had been completed.

It added that it was clear that government would battle to stick to the original budget, especially in view of the fact that a large part of donor funds promised had not been received as yet. According to the newspaper an original cost of R550-million was budgeted by Johannesburg World Summit Company (Jowsco), a section 21 company formed by government to run the summit.

(See International Meetings, page 839)

Government undertook to fund R200-million at national, provincial and local level, while R120-million was promised by EU donor countries and R230-million by other donors.

[Background Info. South Africa, page 824:a]

b. 'Risk to UN if Iraq is attacked': Former President Nelson Mandela has warned President George W Bush the United States risked destroying the United Nations if it attacked Iraq without international support, the British Broadcasting Corporation reported, Sept 2.

BBC News said it had "learned that Mandela spoke directly to the US President to urge him to show restraint, saying a military strike would undermine the trust between America and a spectrum of international opinion".

There was no immediate confirmation from Mandela's office that he had spoken to Bush about Iraq.

The BBC added Mandela "is also said to be seeking a meeting with UK Prime Minister Tony Blair to express his concerns" about Iraq.

c. Indian first woman to head police: A South African Indian has become the first woman to reach the top in the country's police force that was once reserved for whites, it was reported, Aug 20.

Vijayanthimala Singh was recently made the deputy national commissioner of police, a boost for women and previously disadvantaged communities as such positions were reserved for whites only in the apartheid era.

"I'm very exhilarated about it!" an excited Ms Singh said. Married to lawyer Jay and mother of a 15-year-old high school student, Ms Singh joined the police only two and a half years ago after starting out her career as a teacher.

"At a personal level I think it's a great achievement for somebody that came in as a lateral entrant to rise to that position. At a general level, for women it's a great achievement in that we have succeeded in breaking the ceiling into what was previously just a male domain".

Ms Singh, whose main task in her last job as a divisional commissioner in the South African Police entailed ensuring there was employment equity, said the profile of the former police service that was largely white is changing rapidly.

The South African police have a bad public image, with allegations of corruption.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg and *Asian Age*, New Delhi)

SUDAN

a. Annan urges parties to resume talks: UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Sept 4, urged the Sudanese government and southern rebels to return to the negotiating table and put an end to the country's 19-year civil war.

In a statement released by his office, Annan called on the government and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) "to build upon the progress made towards bringing an end to devastating conflict in the Sudan".

Sudanese government negotiators walked out of talks, Sept 2, after SPLM/A forces seized the strategic southern town of Torit, located some 100 km southeast of the Nile River port and the key government garrison town of Juba.

US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Walter Kansteiner has also expressed regret over the suspension of talks. "The United States is deeply disappointed by the decision of the government of the Republic of Sudan to withdraw its delegation from the Machakos talks," he said in a statement.

US involvement in the peace process, including the appointment of a special envoy to Sudan, has been seen by many observers as a key factor in bringing both sides to the negotiating table.

[Background Info. Sudan, page 801:a]

b. Rights group condemns newspaper suspension: A human rights organisation in Sudan has protested against the government's decision to hand down a one-day suspension on a leading newspaper over an article it published on female circumcision.

In a statement, the Sudan Organisation Against Torture (SOAT) said, Aug 30, the decision to suspend publication of the Khartoum-based *Al Ayam* newspaper had been reached on August 24 by the Sudan National Press Council (NPC). The NPC is a government-run body which monitors the print media in the country. It accused *Al Ayam* of "offending public decency" by publishing an article on the widespread practice of female circumcision - also known as female genital mutilation (FGM) - in its medical column which deals with health questions from readers, according to SOAT.

"The action of the NPC demonstrates both the continued restrictions on freedom of expression imposed by the government, and its unwillingness to allow open discussion of personal or medical matters, especially on the issue of female circumcision," SOAT said.

c. Turabi taken to prison: The key Sudanese opposition leader has been transferred from house arrest to prison, amid increasing tension between his party and the government.

A ruling party leader, Sept 1, said moving Hassan Turabi from his home in a Khartoum neighbourhood where he had been detained for a year to the high security Konber Prison was a purely security matter. A few days earlier, several leaders of

Turabi's Popular National Congress, including two former government ministers, were arrested. The police said the arrests came after attacks launched by Turabi's supporters on students and clashes with police.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi and *Hindu*, Madras)

[Background Info. Sudan, page 825:a]

TANZANIA

a. Agreement signed with US to combat financial crimes: The US government and Tanzania have signed an agreement on technical assistance in the battle against financial and economic crimes, notably money laundering and terrorist finance, it was reported, Aug 27.

At a ceremony in Dar-es-Salaam, US Ambassador Robert Royall and Tanzanian finance minister Basil Mramba agreed on a work-plan which is aimed at enabling Tanzania to build capacity in prevention, investigation and prosecuting those who participate in organised crime and criminal groups laundering the proceeds of crime and corruption.

"Some people might say that money laundering is not a big problem in Tanzania, since we don't have any large drug trafficking or organised criminal groups," Royall commented at the signing ceremony. "However, money laundering facilitates all crimes, by providing the criminals with the ability to enjoy the proceeds of their crimes and also giving them the resources to expand their criminal activities."

Royall also reminded those at the ceremony of the impact of the 1998 terrorist attacks on the US embassy in Dar-es-Salaam, highlighting the two governments' "common interest in eliminating sources of terrorist financing".

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

TOGO

a. Parliament adopts restrictive new media Bill: The Togolese parliament, Sept 3, passed a new media Bill despite concerns that it would stifle the media in the country.

The new Bill, modifying several aspects of the existing press code, was adopted by the government on August 21, according to news agency reports.

The US-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) said it was "alarmed" at the new legislation which would further restrict Togo's "already repressive" press laws.

"The Bill put forward by cabinet proposes heavy prison sentences for 'defaming or insulting' [the President], state institutions, courts, the armed forces and public administration bodies," CPJ said. The new Togolese Bill increases the penalty for "insulting the Head of State" from six months imprisonment to a "one to five-year jail term with no parole and a fine of one to five million CFA francs (about US \$1,480 to \$7,400)".

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

UGANDA

a. Museveni, Kabila sign troop withdrawal protocol: Presidents Joseph Kabila of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Yoweri Museveni of Uganda signed an accord, Sept 6, in Luanda, Angola, for the withdrawal of Ugandan troops from eastern DRC and normalisation of relations between the two countries.

The accord was signed in the presence of numerous UN diplomats and ambassadors, and was witnessed and signed by Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos. Under the accord, Angola will be in charge of verifying its implementation, while Kabila and Museveni agreed that their respective governments would submit regular reports on the progress of the Ugandan withdrawal.

dos Santos indicated that his country was prepared to become a peacekeeping force in the central African region, after having fought for more than four years alongside the Kinshasa government in a war against rebels supported by Rwanda and Uganda. Starting from the date of the accord, September 6, Uganda will have five days to withdraw its forces from Beni and Gbadolite, areas from which it has already withdrawn 2,000 soldiers.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

ZIMBABWE

a. Farm evictions pick up as Mugabe returns home: President Robert Mugabe returned to Zimbabwe from Johannesburg just as police began preparing to evict more farmers from the country's grain belt, it was reported, Sept 8.

According to farmers' groups, police gave farmers in Mataberland, Mashonaland West—the country's richest grain-producing area - and Mashonaland Central until 2pm, Sept 8, to leave with all their possessions.

The farmers include single property owners - belying Mugabe's claim that only those with more than one farm would be targeted. The police notices came just as the country's bakers warned of worsening bread shortages in urban areas and as Mugabe reversed a decision to ban the import of genetically modified food aid in an effort to avert the worst famine in the country's history. In a rare interview with journalists after his return from Johannesburg, Mugabe said it was "absolute nonsense" that the seizure of farms had contributed to the hunger crisis threatening half of all Zimbabweans.

Colin Powell booed: US Secretary of State Colin Powell's bid to blame Zimbabwe for the prevailing food crisis, Sept 4, backfired when he was booed and jeered by delegates to the Earth Summit.

All hell broke loose when Powell charged that Zimbabwe's alleged lack of respect for human rights and democracy was

causing the food crisis in the country and pushing "millions of people to the brink of starvation".

Powell, who was addressing the summit, was scolded by delegates who saw the attack on Zimbabwe as an attempt to exonerate British Prime Minister Tony Blair from the humiliating dressing down by President Mugabe over Britain's interference in Zimbabwe, Sept 2. The delegates jeered Powell so loudly that South African foreign minister, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma who was chairing the session, had to intervene to enable the American Secretary of State to continue with his address.

Powell was at one point forced to shout back at his hecklers saying: "I have now heard you".

b. Cholera kills 10 in Masvingo: A cholera outbreak has killed 10 people and affected 300 others in Masvingo's Zaka and Bikita districts, it was reported, Sept 6.

It is believed that the disease first hit villagers who were attending a funeral in Chiredzana area two weeks ago before spreading to other areas.

Nine people from Chiredzana and Pfuve areas in Zaka district and another person from Odzi in Bikita have since died of the disease. The outbreak was first detected in Chiredzana area where three people died, Sept 2, while 12 others were hospitalised at Pfuve Clinic and Mashoko Hospital.

Masvingo provincial medical director Dr Tapuwa Magure confirmed the deaths, Sept 5, and said health officials were now on 24-hour alert in a bid to combat the disease.

c. Senior Zanu-PF official shot: A senior Zanu-PF official was shot and killed in Harare, Aug 22, in an incident police suspect to be politically motivated.

Cde Ali Khan Manjengwa (40) of Block 5C Nyenyere Flats in Mbare was shot below the left eye and died on the spot. He was shot while walking along the corridor on his way to a friend's flat after attending a meeting with some Zanu-PF youths in one of the block of flats, according to the police. The shooting occurred just after 10 pm. "Two suspects were seen running away from the scene and members of the public tried in vain to give chase," Inspector Andrew Phiri said.

(SOURCE: *Independent*, Harare and *Asian Age*, New Delhi)

REGIONAL

a. Cautions optimism on African conflicts: Four sets of peace negotiations are going on or about to start in Africa, raising cautious hopes that there could be breakthroughs in the continent's longest and most intractable conflicts, it was reported, Aug 20.

The climate of negotiations is markedly different from what it was just four years ago. Then the conflicts in Sudan, Burundi, Congo and Somalia were in full swing. Additional wars were raging in Angola and Sierra Leone and between Ethiopia and Eritrea, all of which have recently been settled.

Talks are going on in Machakos, Kenya, aiming to end Sudan's civil war, modern Africa's longest. Negotiations in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, are trying to resolve Burundi's civil strife. There also have been positive signs for the Congo conflict at the negotiating table. And in September, factional leaders in Somalia will talk to, instead of shoot at, their rivals.

"We seem to be in the midst of one of the ebbs of conflicts and one of the flows of peacemaking," said John Prendergast, director of the Africa programme at the International Crisis Group, a research organization based in Brussels.

John Danforth, US President George W Bush's special envoy for peace in Sudan, cautioned, Aug 19, that "peace is something that is more than signing a piece of paper". But declared himself optimistic the war between the Sudanese government and a rebel group might be nearing an end. Analysts said though, that lasting peace remains a long shot.

"Because the conflicts have been going on so long, you have to have a dose of realism," Walter Kansteiner, the US assistant secretary of state for African affairs said, "But there is good cause for optimism. We have a swath of territory through the heart of Africa that is on the verge of peace".

One hopeful sign is the leading role that African leaders are playing in resolving the wars. The flurry of peace talks has

coincided with the formation in July of the African Union, which made clear that it plans to police the transgressions of member countries.

South Africa has led the negotiations in Congo and Burundi, and Kenya has played a leading role in the Sudan and Somalia talks. African governments see an economic motive for peace. The new partnership for Africa's development calls on governments to cease their wars and human rights violations, with the prospect of gaining a multi-billion-dollar infusion of assistance from the West.

b. Global warming takes its toll: The average temperature in Africa rose 0.7 C in the 20th century due to climate change, conservation group World Wide Fund for Nature said, Aug 21.

Higher temperatures could lead to further desertification, it warned. The WWF blamed the warmer climate for a gradual decrease in Africa's biodiversity, which it said was essential for sustaining the habitat on the continent. As an example of one of the more dramatic results of the warmer climate in Africa, it said that the glaciers on Mt Kilimanjaro, the continent's tallest mountain, have thinned out 82% from 1912 levels.

(SOURCE: *New York Times* and *Statesman*, Calcutta)

INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS

Action plan for sustainable growth—Earth Summit 2002

A UN summit aimed at cleansing the world of the darkest stains of poverty and averting a potential crash of its ecosystem ended in Johannesburg with a pledge to tackle those goals, backed by the massive, yet much diluted, programme for action.

Billed as charts for determining the planet's future over the next decade, the two key documents became watered-down compromises after they became a battlefield between the United States, the European Union and US President George W Bush's conservative agenda largely emerged victorious. South African President Thabo Mbeki closed the World Summit on Sustainable Development after a contentious three-day debate at leadership level.

The Earth Summit was the follow-up to the famous 1992 Rio Summit, which linked the problems of poverty and environment and set the international community on a path for fixing them. The meeting issued a Johannesburg Declaration in which 189 states affirmed their commitment to haul the world's two billion poorest out of misery, and to restore and nurture the damaged environmental web that sustains all of its life.

"The deep fault line that divides human society between the rich and the poor and the ever-increasing gap between the developed and developing world pose a major threat to global prosperity, security and stability," the statement said.

It painted a stark warning of the planet's ecological health, marking the exceptional assessment that global warming was

no longer a future peril. Not a single word of the charter is binding, but the principles and aims it sketches have political weight because they are likely to shape the international agenda on the environment for the next decade or so.

Major gains

- Climate change:** Strongly urges nations to ratify 1997 Kyoto protocol in a timely manner.
- Trade:** Reaffirms idea of phasing out agricultural and other trade-distorting subsidies.
- Energy:** Deletes specific targets for renewable energy by 2015. The US, Australia and OPEC nations pushed to expand the category to include hydroelectric dams and some uses of fossil fuels.
- Water and sanitation:** Reduce by half the 2 billion people living without clean water and sanitation by 2015.
- Biodiversity:** To "significantly reduce" the loss of species by 2015. No specific number of percentage of species protected.
- Good governance:** Emphasises the need to fight corruption and promote democracy and the rule of law, but not as a condition for receiving aid.

Greens allege hijack by WTO: Environmental organisations like WWF and Greenpeace among eight other well known NGOs alleged that the summit was hijacked by the World Trade Organisation. So much so that the United States had the temerity to seek bargaining.

The US rejected all calls to ratify the Kyoto Protocol and sought instead to fund energy partnerships for projects on energy in countries of its choice.

800 rare species extinct: Since the Earth Summit meeting in Rio de Janeiro 10 years ago, more than 180 countries have signed a convention to protect one of the planet's most valuable natural resources: the tremendous variety and diversity of plant and animal species.

But more than 800 species already have disappeared, usually because of the degradation of their environments, and 11,000 more are threatened by extinction, according to the World Conservation Union. Moreover, in a related threat that has become greater in the decade since Rio, nature is being changed through the irreversible genetic modification of plants and challenged by the engineering of human and animal genes.

The United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Anna, has listed biological diversity as one of five priorities for the World Summit for Sustainable Development in Johannesburg.

Deadly hole above the Antarctic: The annual depletion of the earth's protective ozone layer has begun over Antarctica and the hole is set to expand in coming weeks, the World Meteorological Organisation said, Aug 23.

In its latest bulletin, the WMO said the size of the ozone hole over the Antarctic was "normal for this time of year".

The depletion began as delegates prepared to discuss environmental issues in Johannesburg at the Earth Summit, officially the United Nations's World Summit on Sustainable Development.

The ozone layer protects people from harmful radiation and many scientists blame its depletion on chemicals such as chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and some crop fumigants.

The Geneva-based UN agency said a second region of very low ozone levels had appeared near the southern tip of South America and spread north over much of Argentina.

"As expected, the annually occurring ozone hole is again forming over Antarctica. The ozone hole is still small, but will expand and deepen during the next four to six weeks," WMO said.

When Russia threatened not to ratify the Kyoto Protocol, virtually admitting that Russia's contribution to air pollution, and

thus to global warming, is well within its limits or quota, it seemed as if Russia was smarting under US pressure.

But Russia and Canada as well, despite US pressure ratified the Kyoto Protocol and this is not just a rude snub to the world's single superpower but also shows how much the US stands alienated. With China ratifying the Kyoto Protocol, Bush has become an embarrassment even to the Americans, if he talks is to be believed.

And, as if in vindication of the allegation that commerce and trade have hijacked the second Earth Summit, the global giant Ericsson announced a partnership with Red Cross and Red Crescent.

Friends of the Earth International has condemned American Secretary of State Colin Powell's announcement that he deplored the action of countries that rejected US food aid that contained GMOs.

"The stance of the US government advances the interests of the multimillion-dollar biotech companies looking for overseas markets," a harsh statement issued by the chairperson of Friends of the Earth said.

"Throughout this summit, the US Administration has betrayed our environment and the needs of the poor and vulnerable around the world". Describing Powell's speech as shameless, the statement adds that the responsibility of the US for the relative failure of this Summit is paramount.

"The whole world knows it. Nothing the Secretary of State had to say will make the slightest difference to this damning verdict".

Japan sought sustainable fisheries; India rejected partnerships, perhaps for fear of losing out on patents of biodiversity, but summit journalists were a little surprised that Australia will be continuing to promote sustainable development beyond Johannesburg, leading 12 voluntary partnerships and participating in more than six other partnerships.

The partnerships include global and regional initiatives, involve more than 50 countries and scores of international, national and regional bodies and is expected to impact on most parts of the world—particularly developing countries in the Asia Pacific region. These partnerships include issues ranging from energy efficiency air pollution, sustainable agriculture and forestry, marine biodiversity and illegal fishing to HIV/AIDS.

"These partnerships are where the real progress will be made in implementing sustainable development," said Australian Minister for Environment and Heritage David Kemp.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, New Delhi, *Deccan Herald*, Bangalore, *Telegraph*, Calcutta)

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ANGOLA

a. Government to resettle over 300,000 displaceds: More than 300,000 war displaceds and demobilized people will be re-settled in 2002, southern Huila province social welfare minister Joao Baptista Kussumua said, Sept 17.

Addressing a ceremony for celebration of the 80th anniversary of Angola's first President, Agostinho Neto, on September 17, the minister added that in the operation the government will count on the support of social partners, UN agencies, non-governmental organisations, churches and associations.

He stated that the displaceds and demobilized people will be reintegrated in agricultural activities to combat poverty.

"Provision of assistance to the needy people is government's top priority to follow Agostinho Neto's doctrine that the most important is to solve people's problems", he said. To celebrate Agostinho Neto's birthday four schools were opened in Lubango.

b. Meningitis kills five children in Huila: Five children died of meningitis in August at Lubango's paediatrics hospital in Angola's southern Huila province, an official source said, Sept 10.

Provincial health supervisor Avelino Muenecongo added that another 21 suspected cases of meningitis were reported, 10 of which in Lubango and 11 at Caconda municipality. The disease broke out in the province two months ago but a vaccination campaign could still help prevent it from spreading, he said.

c. Over 2,000 children vaccinated against measles in Moxico: Health authorities vaccinated at least 2,062 children against measles in Moxico, it was reported, Sept 23.

Health authorities vaccinated at least 2,062 children aged below 14 against measles at sheltering centres in eastern Moxico Province, during a campaign held on September 20-22. Vaccination programme supervisor, Gabriel Mateus, told Angop that vaccines used in the campaign have been donated by the UN Children's Fund (Unicef). The anti-meningitis campaign will be supported by non-governmental organizations operating in Moxico.

(SOURCE: *Namibian*, Windhoek)

BOTSWANA

a. Africa-America Institute award for President Festus Mogae: The Africa-America Institute bestowed its highest honour, the National Leadership Award, on Festus Mogae, President of Botswana, at its 18th annual awards dinner at the UN, Sept 17.

The award recognizes extraordinary leadership in the development and growth of Africa and has been presented only once before to former President Nelson Mandela of South Africa.

"We are honoured to present this historic award to President Mogae," said Mora McLean, president of the Africa-America Institute (AAI).

"By his leadership and courage, President Mogae has helped dramatically improve the lives of the people of Botswana by actively fighting the scourge of AIDS while also improving the economy through Diamonds for Development. We are honoured by his presence tonight and are grateful for the enormous contribution President Mogae has made toward profound and lasting change."

The third President in Botswana's 35-year history, Mogae is particularly recognized for the leadership he took in the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS. Mogae's government is currently initiating an antiretroviral programme, and through a variety of public-private partnerships has established the first laboratory and training devoted exclusively to the advanced study of HIV.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BURUNDI

a. Government investigating massacre of 183 people: A commission has been established by the Burundi government to investigate the massacre of 183 people on September 9, by unknown gunmen in Itaba Commune, central Gitega province.

After learning about the massacre, the government decided to form an investigation commission consisting of members of the army and officials from Gitega province, government spokesman Albert Mbonerane said, Sept 12.

The commission's duty was to shed light on when exactly the massacre took place, how it was carried out, and who died.

Meanwhile, the executive secretary of the Front pour la Démocratie au Burundi (FRODEBU), Jean de Dieu Mutabazi, requested on private Radio Bonesha that an independent inquiry involving local and international human rights organisations should be established to avoid a "false report".

Egide Niyongabo of the independent human rights advocacy body, Iteka, confirmed that it had sent observers to the area and would return with its findings.

b. New influx of Burundi refugees: Following a recent increase in fighting in Burundi, over 300 refugees have crossed the border into western Tanzania over the last three days, a humanitarian agency said, Sept 13.

This influx of refugees, most of whom are young men, is the biggest in several months and corresponds with recent reports of further clashes between the forces of the transitional national government and Hutu rebels, said Jesse Kamstra, project coordinator for Tanganyika Christian Refugee Service in Kibondo.

"These refugees started arriving a few days after reports of increased fighting," Kamstra said. "From the initial impression we are getting, there are some women and children, but 65 per cent of these refugees are young men, about 18 years old, or even younger."

"They are from both sides - rebels that are losing and also the national army. It appears that President Pierre Buyoya's army is using many of the young men as frontliners and when they get a chance to, they flee."

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

CAMEROON

a. Ruling party wins majority in re-election: Cameroon's ruling party won 16 out of 17 seats in parliamentary re-elections held, Sept 15, after irregularities in the original poll in June, Cameroon Radio and Television reported, Sept 17.

Provisional results indicated that the Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM) party won all the seats except the Kumba urban constituency, which was taken by the Social Democratic Front (SDF), the national broadcaster reported.

The Supreme Court will officially proclaim the results after the votes have been recounted by the national votes counting committee, in accordance with the constitution, CRTV added.

Members of the national votes counting commission had begun meeting in the capital, Yaounde, to conduct the final count but have up to 20 days to complete it, according to the report.

Cameroon's Supreme Court ordered fresh legislative elections in nine constituencies, with a total of 17 seats, because of irregularities during parliamentary polls held on June 30.

In those polls, the CPDM increased its share of seats in parliament from 116 to 133. The SDF secured 21 seats, down from the 43 it previously held.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Cameroon, page 781:a]

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

a. Former defence minister back on trial for coup plot: The trial of CAR former defence minister Jean-Jacques Demafouth - which was suspended in March due to a boycott by his defence counsels - resumed, Sept 17.

However, it was temporarily suspended due to the alleged failure of the prosecutor to provide a number of documents to the defence team. The defence counsels have also demanded a copy of the tape which allegedly contains a recording of a

conversation between Demafouth and Congolese rebel leader Jean-Pierre Bemba regarding the planned coup attempt.

The court president, Zacharie N'douba, demanded that both the missing documents and the tape be provided to the defence, at which point the trial would continue.

Demafouth was arrested in August 2001 on suspicion of planning a coup with the help of Bemba. The prosecutor's office contends that the coup attempt failed because former President Andre Kolingba was first to launch a failed coup on May 28, 2001. During the preliminary court session, Demafouth denied his involvement in any coup plot and proclaimed his loyalty to CAR President Ange-Felix Patasse. He accused Patasse's entourage of being behind his arrest.

[Background Info. Central African Republic, page 818:a]

b. WFP to launch emergency operation for IDPs in Bangui: The UN's World Food Programme (WFP) is to provide three months' food to 9,166 households of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Bangui, capital of the Central African Republic (CAR).

WFP officer Willy Mpoyiwampoyi said, Sept 12, that up to 55,000 people will receive maize meal, pulses, vegetable oil, iodized salt and corn soya blend in an operation scheduled to start by the end of September. The food will be shared among the IDPs as well as some Congolese refugees and their host communities. "It is anticipated that the distributed food would be shared among displaced people and their hosts, thus enabling the IDPs to pay their debt," Mpoyiwampoyi said.

The displaced people have been relying on the host families for food. "As long as they cannot pay, they are in one way or another tied to their hosts, meaning they will remain displaced," he added. The operation will cost a total of US \$1,385,301.

WFP is the lead agency in the operation. The UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) have already distributed other forms of aid to the IDPs.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

CONGO

a. Senior genocide suspect arrested in Brazzaville: The former mayor of Murambi commune in the North Rwanda province of Mutara, Jean-Baptiste Gatete, was arrested in Brazzaville on genocide charges, Sept 10.

Gatete is known to have been one of the first people to be sought by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR). Gatete was arrested by local police in Ngombe village, north of Brazzaville.

He is believed to have entered Congo-Brazzaville in 1996 under the name Jean Nsengiyumva. Until his arrest, he worked as a French teacher.

The ICTR has been pursuing Gatete for allegedly participating in the killings of ethnic Tutsis in the East Rwanda province

of Kibungu during the 1994 genocide. An estimated one million Tutsis were killed during the genocide.

Gatete was appointed mayor of Murambi in the 80s. He was first accused of human rights violations shortly after the beginning of the RPA war in 1990. Human rights organisations accused him of participating in the killings of a dozen Tutsis arrested on allegations of complicity with the rebels.

The victims are said to have been in transit to Byumba prison. Gatete was dismissed from his position by a coalition government in 1993.

b. People hit by famine in southern Congo: Thousands of people are currently hit by famine in Congo Brazzaville, it was reported, Sept 10.

Official and humanitarian sources confirmed that as much as 32 per cent of the country's entire population is starving. But addressing a press conference on August 22, a top official of the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization, Jacques Diouf said he was "shocked by the news".

For him, a country like Congo that enjoys good rainfall, fertile soil, reasonable financial resources from petrol products and with less population density should not suffer from such calamity. But despite all these resources, the FAO boss told media representatives that Congo continued to import foodstuff every year at a cost of 150 million FCFA (about US \$ 435,000) to feed its estimated 2.5 million people.

Diouf regretted that the war had destroyed the country in the last 10 years, affecting the potential capability of the country to feed its people, especially in the southern part which is basically good and suitable for food production.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

CONGO (DR)

a. UN confirms start of Rwanda troop withdrawal: About 800 troops of the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) began their withdrawal from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sept 17, according to the United Nations peacekeeping mission there.

Meanwhile, another Rwandan battalion left the eastern town of Kalima for Kindu, from where they would be flown to the Rwandan capital Kigali, the UN mission (MONUC) reported.

The withdrawal follows the signing of an accord by Rwandan President Paul Kagame and DRC President Joseph Kabila in Pretoria, South Africa, on July 30. The agreement commits Rwanda to withdrawing its troops from the DRC in exchange for Kinshasa taking measures to address Rwanda's security concerns in the DRC.

Regional analysts have estimated the number of Rwandan forces in the DRC as being between 30,000 to 40,000.

Addressing the RPA troops in Kindu before their departure, Maj Gen James Kabarebe, acting army chief of staff of Rwanda, told his forces that their withdrawal did not mean the hunt for the Interahamwe militia - which is largely held responsible for the 1994 genocide - was over.

b. UN journalist freed: A UN journalist arrested in the city of Gbadolite by the Mouvement de Liberation du Congo (MLC) was released without condition, Sept 21, the UN's Radio Okapi announced.

Franklin Moliba-Sese, who works for the radio, said he had not been physically harmed, but he was tired from his ordeal. The MLC authorities made no comment upon Moliba's release.

The MLC was upset over a report by Moliba on the difficult living conditions of child soldiers of the MLC. During his detention, Moliba was interrogated for having interviewed child soldiers without authorisation and for having "disclosed information of a military nature".

One of the child soldiers interviewed by Moliba complained of ill-treatment and being deprived of food.

The MLC came under fire from diplomatic sources, media freedom groups and human rights organisations demanding Moliba's release. The UN peacekeeping mission in the DRC, MONUC, which had demanded his immediate release, expressed its appreciation for Moliba's release, as did the UN's Radio Okapi partner, the Swiss-based Fondation Hirondelle.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

ERITREA

a. Government urged to free detainees: The Amnesty International has called on the Eritrean authorities to immediately release a number of political dissidents and journalists who have been in detention for a year.

"These arbitrary detentions place Eritrea in contravention of international and regional human rights treaties which the government has only recently ratified," it said. "They also foster a climate of impunity on the part of the authorities."

In a 24-page report, entitled 'Eritrea: Arbitrary detentions of government critics and journalists', the organisation, Sept 18, described the detainees as "prisoners of conscience".

"Critics of the government and journalists from the private press have been held in incommunicado detention for one year now, since the authorities started a sudden clampdown on growing public dissent in September 2001," Amnesty International said.

[Background Info. Eritrea, page 819:a]

b. New envoy to Italy named: Eritrea and Italy have named their new ambassadors to each other's countries following a period of tense relations between the two nations.

According to Eritrea's official Shaebia website, the new Eritrean envoy to Italy is Andemichael Kahsai. His Italian counterpart was named as Emmanuelle Pignatelli, it was reported, Sept 23.

In June, Eritrean President Isayas Afewerki went to Rome where he met Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi for talks on normalising relations.

It was the first time the two men had met since the former Italian ambassador, Antonio Bandini, was asked to leave Eritrea after he protested against the government's detention of dissident politicians in September 2001. Bandini was also the representative of the European Union in Eritrea.

Immediately after the expulsion, Eritrea's ambassador to Italy was asked to leave Rome. The row intensified after EU diplomats in Eritrea were recalled by their governments for "consultations" on the situation.

Before the breakdown in diplomatic relations between the two countries, Italy was Eritrea's largest donor.

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

ETHIOPIA

a. Ministers approve anti-corruption laws: African Union (AU) ministers meeting in Addis Ababa have backed tough new laws aimed at wiping out corruption that has cost the continent an estimated US \$148 billion.

They signed up 26 articles which are expected to be adopted as a convention by African heads of state at the AU summit in Maputo, Mozambique in 2003. The move will see countries agreeing to extradite officials who are suspected or have been convicted of corruption.

Governments will also have the power to confiscate documents from banks to help with convictions. The AU also wants both civil society and the media to play a role in the fight.

But within the anti-corruption blueprint is also an article guaranteeing fair trials to those arrested for corruption. The laws also include a "double jeopardy" rule, which means that no one can ever be tried for the same crime twice.

b. Five killed in grenade attack: Five people have been killed in a grenade attack in western Ethiopia, local sources said, Sept 18.

The attack took place, Sept 17, after the grenade was thrown into a pick-up truck in Gambella.

It is believed the attack is part of an increase in violence between rival ethnic groups fighting over scarce resources. Bitter fighting has erupted over the last few months between the Anyuak tribe and the Nuer in an area called Itang.

The UN Emergencies Unit for Ethiopia (EUE) said that fertile land along the riverbanks in the region has increased tensions.

"Conflict is increasing in Gambella since early 2002," the EUE said in a recent report after an assessment team was sent to the region to monitor food needs.

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

IVORY COAST

a. Coup attempt foiled, says PM: Government troops fought rebel soldiers in Ivory Coast's second city Bouake, Sept 20, as Prime Minister Pascal Affi N'Guessan said a coup attempt in the nation launched, Sept 19, had failed.

Abidjan, site of fierce fighting, Sept 19, when hundreds of soldiers attacked police barracks and the homes of two ministers, appeared calm and there were also reports of clashes in the northern town of Korhogo.

Interior minister Emile Boga Doudou, former military ruler Robert Guei and at least 80 loyalist troops were killed and 150 wounded in the fighting, the worst outbreak of violence in the former French colony since a military coup in 1999.

"I can assure you that as I speak this attempt has failed," Affi N'Guessan announced, Sept 19.

Defence minister Moise Lida Kouassi, Sept 19, outlined plans to attack Bouake to wrest it from army mutineers.

Abidjan was eerily calm, Sept 20, after the sound of gunfire, which had shattered the city's peace since the coup erupted in Abidjan and in two strategic towns, petered out overnight.

Sports minister Francois Amichia, who was taken hostage by mutinous soldiers in Bouake, said his captors were seeking to hold negotiations with the government, saying on national radio that they wanted to "be retained in the army". The soldiers are angry at plans for demobilisation which were to take place over the coming months.

Meanwhile, French defence minister Michele Alliot-Marie said, Sept 20, that the attempted coup in the Ivory Coast was an internal affair and France, its former colonial ruler, would not get involved.

"France has no intention of interfering", Alliot-Marie told television news channel LCI. She said the mutiny by soldiers in the West African nation was "a purely internal affair". "Under our cooperation agreements, France would be called on to intervene if a country like Ivory Coast is attacked from abroad. But only under those circumstances," the minister said.

The UN Secretary General Kofi Annan condemned the coup attempt in the Ivory Coast and said he was saddened by the loss of life there.

"The Secretary General unequivocally condemns any attempt to settle disputes through violence," spokesman Fred Eckhard said in a statement.

"He calls on all those involved in these attacks to immediately and unconditionally cease their activities and submit to the constitutional order," he said. "He also calls on all concerned parties to refrain from any action that could worsen the situation".

Ivory Coast's former military ruler General Robert Guei was killed when loyalist forces resisted the attempted coup in Ivory Coast, Sept 19, which sources said claimed the lives of at least 80 troops loyal to President Laurent Gbagbo.

The authorities said the coup had failed but the situation in the country remained confused as military insurgents put up continued resistance, especially in the second-largest city of Bouake.

Heavy gunfire was heard in several sectors, but the government of President Laurent Gbagbo vowed to bring the situation under control soon.

Prime Minister Pascal Affi N'Guessan, asked whether a new military coup was under way said: "It's not important to label

what is going on. What's important is to manage the situation, and we're trying to manage the situation and restore calm".

Gbagbo is currently in Italy on an official visit, which he will not cut short, even in the light of the unrest in Ivory Coast, an aide said in Rome.

"The President was informed from the first moment of what was happening in Ivory Coast and gave instructions to restore order," said Alain Toussaint, Gbagbo's communication adviser.

A soldier, Kone Daouda, who gave his rank as private first class said some 750 soldiers had staged the mutiny in Adidjan and in the central city of Bouake, north of Abidjan, where automatic weapons fire was also reported, to protest against their imminent demobilisation.

Gunfire was also heard in the northern town of Korhogo, according to reports, though an authorities refused to admit it as a coup attempt.

France sends troops: Rebel soldiers in Ivory Coast called for talks with the government to avoid a bloodbath, Sept 22, as a showdown loomed in the country. Former military strongman, Gen Robert Guei, has been confirmed killed by independent sources.

France rushed troops to Ivory Coast, saying the reinforcements were to protect French citizens and the international community in its former colony. The French defence ministry did not say how many extra troops had been sent, but France-Info radio reported about 100 more soldiers were bolstering the approximately 600 based at a fortified military base on the outskirts of Abidjan.

Some 20,000 French citizens live in Ivory Coast. Ivory Coast denied it had asked for French help for putting down the uprising. The conflict threatened to spill across borders, as government officials spoke ever-more harshly of suspicions that the country's neighbours were involved in the coup attempt. Top officials have yet to name any nation, but have long accused Burkina Faso of aiding insurrection.

A French military source said loyalists, Sept 22, encircled Ivory Coast's second largest city Bouake held by rebels, who say they are angry at being thrown out of the army.

State television said at least 270 people had been killed and some 300 injured in a bloody uprising has left swathes of land in rebel hands.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi, *Hindu*, New Delhi, *Deccan Herald*, Bangalore and *Asian Age*, New Delhi)

[Background Info. Ivory Coast, page 820:a]

KENYA

a. Kenya drafts new Constitution: The draft of the new Kenyan Constitution creates the post of Prime Minister, while reducing presidential powers, it was reported, Sept 19.

The draft makes fundamental changes in the country's charter, drastically cutting the powers of the President and proposing the creation of the post of the Prime Minister.

"The conclusion we have reached is that to achieve the goals of review and to fully reflect the preferences of the people, we have to have a fundamentally new document", said Yash Pal Ghai, the chairman of the Constitution of Kenya Review Commission.

Under the Constitution proposed by the commission, many presidential powers would be devolved to other areas of the executive and local authorities in provinces and districts.

Since independence in 1963, presidential powers have been considerable and have allowed current head of state Daniel arap Moi to effectively rule by decree.

"The Prime Minister is formally appointed by the President, but must have the support of the House of Assembly (Parliament)," according to the draft Constitution. It imposes no limits on number of terms the Prime Minister can be in office, but says that "he can be voted out by the National Assembly on a vote of no-confidence".

The Prime Minister will appoint the Cabinet and the leader of the government. The President, on the other hand, will be elected directly by the people and serve a maximum of two terms of five years each.

"He or she can be impeached by the National Assembly and he must not be a Member of Parliament or the Cabinet and not be above the law," the draft proposes.

(SOURCE: *Statesman*, Calcutta)

LESOTHO

a. Siemens switches on Lesotho network: Siemens Information and Communications Group has gone live with the first subscriber connection for a wireless local loop network in Lesotho, it was reported, Sept 19.

In terms of the R211 million contract with privatised telecoms operator Telecom Lesotho, Siemens will roll-out a turnkey wireless local loop solution.

A month after the deal was finalised, Siemens has the first of its subscriber connections up and running. Three of the 16 base stations have been installed, covering up to a third of the projected 24,000 subscriber capacity. Areas covered include the Maseru region such as Berea Plateau, Abia and Thaba Bosiu. An additional 13 central base stations will be rolled out by December. Siemens said it is on target to meet its deadline of connecting all 24 000 voice subscribers before the end of 2002. Based on a demand survey undertaken by Telecom Lesotho, the estimated number of customers in Lesotho who require new telephones stands at 150,000.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

MALAWI

a. Opposition politician arrested: An opposition leader has been arrested in Malawi, accused of inciting people to demonstrate against President Bakili Muluzi's bid for a third term, it was reported, Sept 19.

Danga Mughogho, the northern region chairman of the Malawi Forum for Unity and Development, was denied bail, Sept 18, after his arrest. He had allegedly distributed leaflets that called on Malawians to rise up against renewed efforts to change the constitution to allow Muluzi to run for a third term.

Mughogho's arrest has flown in the face of an appeal by Malawi's four major donors for the government to allow wider consultation before going to parliament with a third-term Bill.

There has been mounting pressure from churches, human rights NGOs and the international community over the third-term issue.

In a joint statement, Sept 16, issued from the capital Lilongwe, the envoys of Germany, Norway, Britain and the European Union said they were aware the Bill on presidential term limits was gazetted for debate during the October session of the National Assembly.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Malawi, page 762:a]

MOROCCO

a. Morocco hails Mugabe as one of Africa's greatest statesmen: Morocco has described President Mugabe of Zimbabwe as one of Africa's greatest leaders, who is a source of inspiration to the continent.

Moroccan government officials have described Mugabe, who is on a visit Rabat at the invitation of King Mohammed VI, as an unwavering fighter for the economic and political independence of the African people.

The governor of Casablanca, Aziz Dades, said Africa was a rich continent endowed with many geniuses and President Mugabe was one of them.

He said Morocco was honoured to host one of Africa's outstanding statesmen.

"We are so happy to be with a great president, Robert Mugabe," said Dades. He was speaking at a dinner hosted for President Mugabe and his delegation, Sept 14, by the mayor of Casablanca, Driss Beuhima.

b. New ambassador to Angola nominated: King Mohammed VI, nominated a new ambassador to Angola with which diplomatic relations have improved significantly over the last four years.

Abdellah Ait Al Haj is the newly appointed Moroccan ambassador to Angola, but little is still known about his diplomatic career.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MOZAMBIQUE

a. Police pledge to uncover truth of Cardoso killer's escape: Mozambican police chief Miguel dos Santos, Sept 10, pledged that the authorities will discover who organised the escape from the prison of assassin Anibal Antonio dos Santos Junior (better known as "Anibalzinho").

Anibalzinho is charged with leading the hit squad that murdered Mozambique's best known journalist, Carlos Cardoso, on November 22, 2000. The trial was scheduled for September, but Anibalzinho escaped on September 1. Speaking at a meeting with Afonso Dhlakama, leader of the country's main opposition party, Renamo, dos Santos was sure that the truth could be extracted from the 11 policemen detained after the escape.

"The policemen now in detention will reveal the circumstances of the escape", he said. "They are not going to get away as Anibalzinho did. Their clarification will be beneficial for the rest of us, if not for those who orchestrated the escape".

dos Santos was certain that at least one of the commanders of the three police platoons that were supposed to be guarding Anibalzinho will reveal the truth

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info, Mozambique, page 834:c]

NIGER

a. Human rights defender sentenced to jail: The president of Niger's human rights league, Bagnou Bonkougou, was, Sept 19, sentenced to a one-year jail term and a 20,000 CFA francs fine (US \$30), in a case revolving the August mutiny in the country.

Bonkougou was arrested on August 15, a few days after citing a higher death toll during a radio broadcast than the government had declared.

According to the authorities in Niger, Bonkougou was arrested in violation of a decree by President Mamadou Tandja which forbade the dissemination of information about the mutiny. The decree has since been lifted.

Soldiers started the mutiny (in Diffa, eastern Niger, and in the capital, Niamey) on July 31, demanding better pay and living conditions. They also attempted to take over army barracks. The government announced that it quelled the uprising.

Bonkougou had also said on radio that the government of Niger should allow international investigators to look into the failed mutiny.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Niger, page 834:a]

NIGERIA

a. Mugabe snubs Obasanjo, others: The leaders of Australia, Nigeria and South Africa gathered in Abuja, Sept 22, for a meeting of the Commonwealth "troika" on the crisis in Zimbabwe, but a furious President Robert Mugabe pulled out of the meeting.

Australia's Prime Minister John Howard got off his plane in Abuja to be met with the news that Mugabe had changed his mind about coming to the meeting to discuss Commonwealth sanctions against his troubled country. Commonwealth officials said that the event - at which Howard will discuss tightening

santions with Nigeria's President Olusegun Obasanjo and South Africa's President Thabo Mbeki - would continue as planned.

"The situation in Zimbabwe is very important. The situation cannot be allowed to continue indefinitely," Obasanjo said after a meeting with Howard at his official Abuja residence. Obasanjo said the troika was most concerned about the "humanitarian issues" arising from Mugabe's policy of throwing white farmers off their land and from a catastrophic drought that has brought millions to the brink of starvation.

b. Beauties raise rights issue: A looming beauty queen boycott of the upcoming Miss World pageant in Abuja has forced Nigeria to defend its human rights record, it was reported, Sept 20.

Contestants from France, Belgium, Norway, Ivory Coast and Kenya have threatened to boycott the November pageant in the Nigerian capital unless the government overturns the conviction of a woman by an Islamic court condemning her to death by stoning.

A Nigerian government statement prominently displayed on the Miss World website suggested the sentences by Islamic "sharia" courts in northern Nigeria could be reversed on appeal. "There are higher courts yet to examine the case," the Nigerian government statement said.

Northern Nigeria's Upper Sharia Court in August rejected an appeal by 31-year-old Amina Lawal Kurami who was sentenced to be stoned to death for bearing a child outside of marriage.

She has appealed the sentence but could be executed sometime in 2004 after weaning her daughter, now 10 months old, if she loses the appeal.

"No Nigerian government has never undermined the rights of its citizens and will not look away when these rights are threatened", said the statement signed by foreign minister Dubem Onyia.

Africa's most populous country of over 120 million people won the right to host the annual pageant after Nigeria's Agbani Darego was crowned Miss World in 2001 in South Africa. Nigeria hoped that hosting pageant, begun in 1951, would boost its tourism industry and reduce its heavy dependence on revenues from crude oil.

In March an appeal court quashed a stoning sentence on another woman, Safiya Hyssaini Tungan-Tudu, after worldwide appeals for her clemency.

(SOURCE: *Deccan Herald*, Bangalore)

[Background Info. Nigeria, page 823:b]

RWANDA

a. 'Bagosora was member of Akazu': Col Theoneste Bagosora, mastermind of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, was part of the 'Akazu', a group of powerful individuals close to then President Juvenal Habyarimana, expert witness Alison Des Forges said, Sept 23.

Bagosora is one of four defendants in the so-called "Military Trial," the highest-profile case before the tribunal. He is jointly

tried with Col. Anatole Nsengiyumva, Brig Gen Gratien Kabiligi and Maj Aloys Ntabakuze. All four defendants have denied charges of genocide and crimes against humanity.

Des Forges, senior advisor in the Africa Division of Human Rights Watch, is the first witness in the trial that resumed on September 2. She has been testifying since September 5.

"The Akazu did not publish its organizational structure. The Akazu was a fluid group, which changed in composition according to circumstances. In general terms, Bagosora was in most circumstances part of this group," Des Forges said, under cross-examination by Raphael Constant of Martinique/France, counsel for Bagosora.

b. Jean-Baptiste Gatete denies 10 counts of genocide: Jean-Baptiste Gatete, former Murambi mayor in Kibungo province, Sept 20, denied ten counts of genocide and crimes against humanity when he appeared before the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR).

Gatete, 49, responded: "I'm not guilty" to all the counts, read out by Judge Yakov Ostrovsky of Russia. Francis Musei of Tanzania, duty counsel, represented Gatete while Andra Mobberley of New Zealand represented the prosecution.

Congo Brazzaville security officers arrested Gatete on a warrant issued by Carla Del Ponte, ICTR chief prosecutor. He was transferred to the United Nations Detention Facility (UNDF) on September 14.

The arrest follows a visit by Adama Dieng, ICTR registrar, to Congo Brazzaville in February 2002, where government officials assured him of the country's co-operation in the arrest of alleged perpetrators of the 1994 Rwanda genocide living in Congo. Gatete has been a French teacher in Congo Brazzaville since he fled Rwanda in 1996.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Rwanda, page 823:a]

SIERRA LEONE

a. Sankoh critical in prison: Medical reports on the state of Foday Sankoh's health, following his protracted incarceration at the maximum security prisons, Pademba Road, have confirmed that the health of the caged rebel leader was critical.

Police officer, P.C.3843 Alfred Bashiru Sesay, attached to the Criminal Investigation headquarters in Freetown, under cross examination in court, Sept 17, told the court that Sankoh was in a critical state, and that his medical report, which was endorsed by the prison doctor, J. B Sandy, indicated that he was seriously ill and was unfit to attend court sessions.

Among the other 'west side boys' incarcerated with their former leader, the 15th accused person, Osman Conteh has also been reported to have died on August 27, 2002.

The reason or manner of his death was however not made known during the session, but may not be unconnected with the inhuman state of the prisons.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SOMALIA

a. Women demand bigger role in Somali peace talks: Somali women have demanded to be given a bigger role in the peace and reconciliation talks scheduled for October 15 in Nakuru.

The chairman of the International Resource Group (IRG) on governance and the rule of law in the Horn of Africa, Ms Asha Elmi, complained that women's role in the peace talks has not been stated.

"Until now, it looks like we shall be left out in the cold despite our integral importance in such talks," Elmi said. She added: "We want our role stipulated. We want to be told what we will do and what part we shall play in the talks."

She said women were still "very much worried" about the Nakuru peace talks that will be chaired by Kenyan President Moi.

Elmi made the remarks at Leopard Beach Hotel in Kwale district during the closure of a three-day international seminar on governance and the rule of law.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SOUTH AFRICA

a. China and South Africa sign ICT agreement: South Africa and China have signed an agreement to co-operate on information, communication and technology (ICT).

Communication minister Ivy Matsepe-Casaburri signed the agreement together with the Chinese industry and information minister Wu Jichuan, in Cape Town, Sept 19. In terms of the agreement, the two parties will cooperate in communication policy and regulatory framework, technical standards and certification, radio frequency spectrum, and management tools such as computer assistance.

The two parties will also explore areas of human resources development, sharing of experiences in satellite and other communication networks, exchange of information concerning communication technologies and policies within the framework of international organization.

The agreement will be effected through relevant structures mandated by the parties, namely; Huawei International Training Department under Southern African Regional Department and the Institute for Satellite and Software Application.

b. Mbeki condemns death by stoning in Nigeria: President Thabo Mbeki has objected to the sentencing to death by stoning of a Nigerian woman, by an Islamic court, for having a baby out of wedlock.

"We obviously object to death by stoning!" the President exclaimed, adding that he had discussed the matter with Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo.

He was responding to questions in Parliament in Cape Town, Sept 19.

However, President Mbeki said the issues of the Islamic and the Christian religion in Nigeria were critical, thus its management therefore was very critical.

Ms Amina Lawal was sentenced to death after conceiving a baby after being divorced for two years. She lost her appeal and is expected to be publicly stoned as soon as her baby is weaned.

The verdict has drawn a massive international outcry, the latest being a threat by Miss World participants to withdraw from the pageant - which is scheduled to be staged in Nigeria - if the verdict is not withdrawn.

c. Countries commit to nuclear test ban: South Africa and 18 other United Nations member states have urged all states that have not signed a treaty to ban the nuclear weapon testing, to do so as soon as possible.

Eighteen countries ratified the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) in New York, Sept 16.

The countries were part of the participants attending the United Nations General Assembly meeting in New York.

The treaty will contribute to a systematic and progressive reduction of nuclear weapons and the prevention of nuclear proliferation, as a major instrument in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

The countries that ratified the treaty include Australia, Canada, Chile, France, Hungary, Japan, Jordan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Korea, Nigeria, Peru, Philippines, Russia, South Africa, Sweden, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

d. Black youth painted white for shoplifting: South African rights groups expressed outrage, Sept 18, after a young Black man was painted white for allegedly stealing from a supermarket in a conservative rural town.

Police said that they found Evans Madonsela covered with paint after he was accused of shoplifting food from the Shoprite supermarket in Secunda, Mpumalanga, Sept 16.

"He was covered all over, including his face. He has suffered because of the paint on his face," said police spokeswoman Captain Sibongile Nkosi.

The incident, which made headlines in national newspapers, Sept 18, occurred just days after a teenage girl in Limpopo province was awarded 25,000 rand (\$2,362) in damages after she was humiliated in a similar way two years ago.

The South African Human Rights Commission said the incident was a degrading form of punishment "reminiscent of a medieval and archaic era" and had no place in the new South Africa.

Madonsela, who was charged with shoplifting and released on bail, has accused two Black security staff of dousing him in paint while another White security guard looked on.

He said laid assault charges against the supermarket chain, which has denied any wrongdoing.

"Shoprite Checkers strongly denied that any member of its staff was involved in the alleged painting of the alleged shoplifter

and it has the assurance of the independents security company that their employees are neither responsible for such actions," the retailer said in a statement.

Nkosi said the security guards told police that Madonsela had painted himself after he was locked in a security room where tins of paint were stored. "What is puzzling us is that he was handcuffed at the time. We are still investigating," Nkosi said.

"It does conform to a definition of vigilantism in that it is a highly visible form of punishment," said Bronwyn Harris, researcher at the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation.

"But if someone says they did it because of frustration over crime, it can be a handy cover for racism," said Harris, who is researching a report on racially-motivated crimes.

(SOURCE: *Indian Express*, New Delhi)

SUDAN

a. Ceasefire will bring us back to talks, says foreign minister: Without a ceasefire there is no need to return to Nairobi, Sudan's foreign minister, Dr. Mustapha Osman Ismail, told a small group of reporters, Sept 19.

"The government is committed to [the] Machakos [agreement]," the minister said. The Sudanese government suspended its participation in peace talks at the start of September to protest the resumption of military hostilities by the SPLM/A rebels.

Sudan's government and Southern rebels reached agreement in Machakos, July 20, on a "framework" for peace aimed at ending the 19-year-old civil war in the huge north-east African nation. That deal included agreement on two of the most contentious issues in Sudan: southern self-determination and the status of religion in the state.

(See Analysis, page 852)

Warring parties sign anti-mine pact: The United Nations has signed an agreement with both the Sudanese government and the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) on UN support to remove landmines from the war-torn country.

Both the Sudanese government and the SPLM/A would, with help from the UN, jointly develop a national mine action strategy to meet emergency humanitarian needs, the UN said, Sept 20.

The agreement was signed during the fourth meeting of states parties to the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention, which took place in Geneva recently, the UN said.

Sudan has signed, but not yet ratified the Ottawa Treaty against landmine use, and has repeatedly denied laying landmines, claiming the SPLM/A is primarily responsible for their use in Sudan.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Sudan, page 837:a]

TANZANIA

a. Human error to blame for June train crash: Human error and negligence, and not technical problems or sabotage, were to blame for Tanzania's train crash in which nearly 300 people were killed, according to an official investigation.

The crash occurred on June 24 when a passenger train carrying over 1 000 passengers lost power and stopped as it was climbing a hill in Dodoma region. It then rolled back into the path of an oncoming freight train.

The passenger train was travelling westwards towards Kigoma and Mwanza.

A report by the commission set up to investigate the accident concluded that the failure of the driver, his inexperienced assistant and the guard to react to the situation were the principal causes of the tragedy.

According to the report, hesitation and misinterpretation of the initial problem by the driver and his assistant resulted in the release of the emergency break and the train beginning to roll back down the hill. The guard is also blamed for failing to apply the handbrakes on the carriages themselves once the train began rolling backwards.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Tanzania, page 778:c]

TOGO

a. Parliamentary polls on Oct 27: The Togolese government has fixed October 27 as the date for parliamentary elections, following a recommendation by the country's electoral college of seven judges.

A presidential decree said the polls, which have been delayed on several occasions, would be held in accordance with a decision taken during a weekly cabinet meeting, Sept 18.

The decree from President Gnassingbe Eyadema stipulated that state security forces would vote three days before the rest of the population so that they could maintain order and security on election day.

Seventeen political parties have announced their intent to participate, along with 12 independent candidates.

b. WAN protests press crackdown: The World Association of Newspapers and World Editors Forum have protested against new restrictions on press freedom and against jail sentences imposed on journalists who had reported on the President's alleged personal wealth.

In a letter to the President, WAN and the WEF called for the immediate release of the journalists and the rejection of restrictive press law amendments that include a five-year prison sentence for "offence to the President of the Republic".

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Tanzania, page 837:a]

UGANDA

a. UPDF rescues 45, kills 10 rebels in Pader: The UPDF killed 10 Kony rebels and rescued 45 captives in a clash with the rebels at Adilang on the borders of Lira and Pader districts, the army spokesman, Major Shaban Bantariza said, Sept 13.

The army lost two soldiers in the battle commanded by an LRA commander identified as Rasta. Six soldiers sustained injuries.

"The bandits cannot afford a successful attack on the army. They are greatly weakened," Bantariza said, Sept 12.

He said the one box of short machine-guns, 18 magazines, 11 bombs of 60mm mortar, two rocket propelled rockets, one hand-grenade and a bicycle were recovered.

Meanwhile, reports from Nairobi said the LRA, Sept 19, attacked another refugee camp in northern Uganda, the third such attack in just over two months. They looted and displaced more than 6,000 Sudanese refugees, the UN refugee agency (UNHCR) said.

The attack on the camp at Maaji in Adjumani district followed an earlier raid on the same camp in July. On August 5, the LRA raided the Achol-Pii camp in neighbouring Pader district, putting its 24,000 resident Sudanese refugees to flight.

b. Two million Ugandans infected with HIV/AIDS: The AIDS Information Centre (AIC) has confirmed that two million Ugandans are infected with the HIV virus, it was reported, Sept 23.

AIC official Resty Bwanga said this at workshop on HIV/AIDS for local leaders from Buganda at the Bulange Plaza.

The workshop, facilitated by the Mengo ministry of health, attracted about 200 participants including sazza chiefs and clan heads.

Bwanga said despite the reported reduction in the HIV/AIDS prevalence in Uganda to below 6%, two million Ugandans had tested positive to the disease.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

ZAMBIA

a. Kaunda oppose US action against Iraq: Former President Kenneth Kaunda, Sept 20, opposed the US action against Iraq.

Speaking soon after his arrival from Iraq where he attended the 8th meeting of the follow-up and co-ordination committee for Baghdad conference, Kaunda said there was no justification for American President George Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair to demand for Iraq President Saddam Hussein's blood.

"We reject Bush and Blair's stand on Iraq," Kaunda said. "It is difficult for me to appreciate what Bush and Blair are doing."

Kaunda disclosed that the stand off between the US and Iraq was discussed during the conference and all the delegates

rejected the Bush and Blair campaign for military action against Iraq.

According to Dr. Kaunda, the delegates to the conference were leaders and members of the business communities from America, Europe, Asia and Africa. He said the Bush and Blair stand was not in the interest of humanity.

(SOURCE: *Times of Zambia*, Lusaka)

ZIMBABWE

a. Controversial land Bill passed: Parliament, Sept 18, passed the controversial Land Acquisition Amendment Bill after heated debate in which the government conceded it had bungled by failing to serve Section 5 notices to bondholders.

The Bill came before Parliament after Patrick Chinamasa, the minister of justice, legal and parliamentary Affairs, had suspended some standing orders and rules to fast-track the projected law.

The Bill - which seeks to increase fines for commercial farmers who resist eviction and to validate preliminary acquisition orders - did not easily sail through as MDC MPs pointed out that Chinamasa had shown elements of "gross incompetence".

Chinamasa admitted that he had made mistakes by failing to serve Section 5 notices on bondholders, which would have enabled banks to submit claims to the acquiring authority.

He said banks and financial institutions were exposed to the tune of \$33 billion to bondholders, whom the government failed to serve with Section 5 notices in accordance with the law.

"I take the responsibility. It was an oversight on our part. I do not know what really went wrong. We have come up with a number of factors, some of which border on sabotage," he said.

[Background Info. Zimbabwe, page 838:a]

b. Retired white judge vanishes after arrest: A 65-year-old retired white Zimbabwean judge disappeared, Sept 13, after being picked up by unknown police at his home before dawn, his lawyers said.

Fergus Blackie, who ordered the arrest of Zimbabwe's justice minister Patrick Chinamasa for contempt of court just before he retired in July, was taken from his home in central Harare at 4am, advocate Dipak Mehta said.

Mehta said he was planning an application to the High Court, Sept 13, for an order to police to produce Blackie in court.

"He vanished after being picked up by some policemen, we don't know who they were," he said.

"I have been running around since this morning and still haven't found where he is. We spoke to people at the law and order section, they claim ignorance. I have been to Harare central (police station) and was given the run around.

I have been to police headquarters and to police special investigations and they claim to be ignorant.

c. Police arrest 315 illegal gold panners: Police in Shamva, Sept 18, arrested 315 illegal gold panners along the banks of Mazowe and Nyagui rivers in a crackdown that sent a thousand others fleeing into nearby hills and forests.

Mashonaland Central police provincial spokesman Inspector Dawson Mahonde said the illegal gold panners were causing extensive environmental damage, threatening the life of Mazowe River, which supports many people in mines, towns and others downstream.

"We are raiding all panners because they are threatening the life of Mazowe River," he said.

"There is a lot of siltation and too much mud, which has led to the blocking of irrigation pipes and engine pumps."

He said newly resettled Model A2 farmers were the hardest hit and were now failing to access water to irrigate their wheat and other crops.

(SOURCE: *Independent*, Harare)

REGIONAL

a. US hunts Qaeda in E Africa: Hundreds of American Special Operations Forces have been moved to a military base in East Africa for missions against fighters with Al-Qaeda links, who are believed to be hiding in the region, particularly in Yemen, according to Pentagon officials.

An amphibious assault ship, the *Belleau Wood*, is sailing off Djibouti, a former French colony on the Horn of Africa across the Gulf of Aden from Yemen, to act as a stepping-stone for the American soldiers, it was reported, Sept 21.

Just under half the 800 US soldiers now in Djibouti are Special Operations Forces trained for stealth attacks to kill or capture suspected terrorists. The rest include pilots and support personnel.

Defence department and military officials said the Special Operations Forces were sent to Djibouti to pursue terrorists who have been operating from the region or who fled there after fighting began in Afghanistan.

"We have ready forces, pre-positioned and waiting for actionable intelligence," one military officer said of the deployment. "We are paying close attention to that part of the world".

"Officials declined to say whether any missions were imminent or whether the government of Yemen had approved possible actions.

But one officer said, "It's easier and certainly more efficient to launch these missions from the region" than from bases in the United States.

A potential target is the uncharted area along Yemen's porous border with Saudi Arabia, officials said. The lawless region has long been a concern of American intelligence as a haven for members of Al-Qaeda.

It is suspected of being a hideout for those responsible for the October 2000 attack on the destroyer Cole in Yemen's port at Aden.

There has been great frustration within the FBI over the lack of progress—and lack of cooperation by the Yemenis—in the investigation of the Cole attack.

Yemeni security services exercise little authority in the border area. Pentagon and military officials said that missions awaited sufficient intelligence to find suspected terrorists as well as discussions to determine the level of cooperation with local governments.

Defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld has been working with military commanders to expand broadly the role of Special Operations Forces in the campaign against terrorism, including sending them worldwide to capture or kill Qaeda leaders.

Proposals under discussion included assigning units to get more deeply involved in long-term operations.

b. AIDS 'compounds' woes in Africa: The AIDS epidemic in southern Africa compounds the region's drought and hunger to create a "crisis like no other" that threatens more than 14 million people, a senior UN official said, Sept 19.

Carolyn McAskie, UN deputy emergency relief coordinator, said the United Nations and regional governments believe the number of people affected is "growing more rapidly than we had anticipated".

The estimate has climbed from 12.8 million, reportedly in July, to 14.4 million today, in a population of 56 million. Half of the hungry are in Zimbabwe.

Ms McAskie and James Morris, executive director of the UN World Food Programme, visited the six countries where hunger is rising fastest—Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe—during the first two weeks of September.

Namibia, Angola and Congo also are starting to feel the effect, she told a press conference on the sidelines of the annual UN General Assembly meeting in New York.

Erratic rains have inflicted drought in some areas and excess rain in others, both of which have seriously reduced the staple crop—maize, or corn.

The drought-stricken countries already have serious problems in agricultural production, health care, education and other areas.

But it is AIDS that makes this drought different, Ms McAskie said. The region has been hit harder than any other part of the world by HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

(SOURCE: *New York Times/Asian Age*, New Delhi and *Hindu*, Madras)

ANALYSIS

Bitter battles in Sudan

The savannah in Western Upper Nile shakes as 3,000 rebel fighters jog around in a giant ring. They are sweating heavily in the midday sun, drenching their motley fatigues.

Dust clouds trail from their flashing white gum-shoes. A bugle blows and they start to sing. "Our leader is in the field! The enemy is coming! Gather young men!"

For almost two decades the young black men of southern Sudan have been gathering to fight the Arab government of Khartoum. The war has been unwinnable for years, claiming two million lives and tearing Africa's biggest country in two, pitching the Islamic-led government of the north against largely Christian and animist rebels in the south. But now oil is starting to break the deadlock. From its few wells in the country's centre, the government is pumping enough oil to buy hi-tech weapons. And with these it is beginning to push the rebels back.

In Western Upper Nile, a remote oil-rich region on the border between north and south Sudan, the ring of jogging rebels is fighting at the turning-point of the war.

The government pulled out of peace talks with the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) rebels, in September pledging to redouble its military effort. It gave as justification of SPLA's recent capture of Torit, a garrison town close to the Kenyan border. Meanwhile it denies its own much bigger recent offensives in Western Upper Nile.

As the rebels run and sing, Peter Gadeat, their commander, watches in silence, unsmiling under a red beret and red-rimmed shades. The enemy is coming. And Commander Gadeat's fighters—young men, and many boys—are working up courage for the fight. "Our leader is in the field!" they sing, their bullet belts jingling in time. "Our leader is stopping the oil!"

Word comes that about 1,200 government militiamen are approaching, and briskly Commander Gadeat deploys the rebels along the kilometer-long front. There is no signing now. "This will be the final battle," Gadeat predicts. "We will win, or we will be destroyed. Either way, many men will die". Hours later the government troops emerge from a huddle of grass huts, about 300 metres in the front of the rebels' position. The rebel pckets are leading them on, firing short bursts and quickly retreating.

Then, with a thunderous roar, mortar shells, rocket-propelled grenades and bullets from heavy machine-guns sleet through the government line and battle begins. Maddened by the bombardment, militiamen charge the clouds of gunsmoke, gambling that behind them a lesser force is hiding. At his command post behind the front line, Commander Gadeat smiles: "The battle has begun well".

The militiamen close to less than 100 metres away. And suddenly the rebels rise from the grass and blaze away with sub-machine guns. Then there is chaos: a storm of swirling white smoke and random gunfire. Within half an hour, the militiamen are running away and the rebels are pursuing them. Laughing

with relief, Commander Gadeat and his senior officers shake hands and then retire to drink sugary black tea in the shade.

Meanwhile, on the savannah, men are dying. One militiaman stumbles blindly about; a red welt across his face where a bullet has passed, pulping both his eyes. Another sits dumbly in the grass, as the blood flows from his groin and a rebel fighter beats him. "Why are you fighting us? We are your people," shouts the rebels, stunning the wounded man with a bamboo stick. The militiamen are black mercenaries from the rebels' own tribe.

David Matwok, a 31-year-old militiaman, lies on his back, chatting with three SPLA fighters. His feet rest at neat right angles to his body, as if he has set them aside to lie down.

"Give me some water, mister", he asks in English. But it is difficult to know how to respond. To alleviate Matwok's suffering would only prolong it; because there is no hope for him. The International Committee of the Red Cross is barred from the Western Upper Nile by the government, and Commander Gadeat's men do not help the enemy wounded.

"Leave him alone," warns Lieutenant Simon Gadwel. "Wild animals can have him". An educated man, Lt Gadwel hopes to become a priest after the war. Thirty SPLA fighters are dead and about 100 seriously wounded. The militiamen's losses are much heavier. A few dozen corpses lie scattered and stripped. But there are many more like Matwok, lying in the long grass, waiting to die. Despite their commander's bold prediction, this was not a decisive victory for the rebels, but a minor riposte to the government's latest offensive. In August government militias supported by high-flying bombers and helicopter gunships routed the rebel fighters and drove 100,000 civilians from Western Upper Nile. Commander Gadeat denies it, but his young fighters say they are powerless against such weapons.

At Mayen Jur, an airstrip in neighbouring Bahr al-Ghazal state, thousands of the displaced await foreign aid. One of them, Peter Gol, says four people were killed in his village by gunships, and 15 children taken by the militiamen as slaves. Gol's six-year-old daughter was drowned crossing a river during the fight. "The Arabs only want our cattle, our children, and our oil," says Gol. "Black people are nothing to them".

With debts of \$17bn and dissent mounting against its autocratic regime, Khartoum needs peace—and the rapidly increased oil production this would bring. But the rebels, despite their weakening position, show no signs of giving up.

"If the government is joking about peace, fine, we will fight them," says Commander Gadeat. "If they bring a thousand helicopter gunships against us, we will fight them. Even if it is impossible for us to beat them, we will still be fighting the Arabs".

—James Astill, in *Guardian Weekly*, reproduced in *Deccan Herald*, Bangalore, Sept 19, 2002)

African Chronicle

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A fortnightly record on governance, economy, development, human rights and environment

September 24—October 7, 2002

Vol III No. 20

ANGOLA

a. UNITA slams extension of sanctions by US: Angola's former rebel group UNITA, Sept 25, slammed a decision by the US government to extend sanctions against it for one more year.

UNITA said the order jeopardised the transformation of the rebel movement into a political party. The sanctions, originally imposed by former US President Bill Clinton in 1993, include a freeze on UNITA's assets in the United States and bars US citizens from selling or supplying arms and petroleum to UNITA.

"It is a bit disingenuous of the Americans to carry on with their sanctions considering they have said that they support national reconciliation. How can we continue to transform UNITA into a political party without international resources. The order does not reflect the realities in Angola and prevailing efforts towards peace," UNITA spokesman, Marcial Dachala said.

The sanctions, which also prohibit imports of diamonds from Angola were implemented as a result of UNITA's decision to resume armed conflict following presidential elections in 1992. Under the sanctions, all UNITA offices in the United States have been closed and sales of mining equipment to Angola are also banned.

"By renewing the sanctions against UNITA, the US is ostensibly trying to prevent any kind of military resurgence of the rebel movement.

[Background Info. Angola, page 746: a]

b. Ratification of trade protocol postponed: Angola has decided to postpone the ratification of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) trade protocol as the country is still suffering from the destructive effects of the civil war.

This was stated, Oct 2, in Luanda by the Angolan President's advisor for regional matters, Albina Assis. She said Angola has yet to reconstruct its macro-economic system ahead of ratifying the protocol.

Angolan economist Francisco Queiro said regional integration should be seen with realism because of the imbalances among the member countries economies, the problems of AIDS, poverty and lack of infrastructure.

(SOURCE: *Namibian*, Windhoek)

BENIN

a. British American Tobacco seizes counterfeit products: About ten million sticks of counterfeit cigarette meant for the Nigerian market have been seized in Cotonou, Benin.

The fake products which are made up of six million sticks of Rothmans King size cigarette as well as four million sticks of

Benson and Hedges were seized by British American Tobacco Nigeria security operatives following a tip-off, it was reported, Oct 1. The latest seizure comes on the heels of a recent operation carried out in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, during which a large consignment of counterfeit cigarette also meant for the Nigerian market was impounded and destroyed.

The growing incidence of counterfeit cigarettes in the Nigerian market has been a source of concern for consumers and tobacco companies in the country.

British American Tobacco Nigeria Limited is taking the threat seriously. It has created a department dedicated to the tracking down, seizure and destruction of these fake products.

Reacting to the seizure in Cotonou, the managing director of British American Tobacco Nigeria, Nick Hales said the increase of counterfeit products which find their way into the Nigerian market is hurting the economy as well as depriving government of huge revenue and this should be checked.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BURKINA FASO

a. Funds appeal for meningitis control: The United Nations World Health Organization and its partners, Sept 27, launched an urgent appeal for 11 million euros (US \$10.8 million) to contain meningitis outbreaks in Africa, it was reported, Sept 30.

The appeal was made at the end of a four-day meeting in Ouagadougou, capital of Burkina Faso, at which strategies to contain meningitis outbreaks and secure cheap vaccines were discussed. WHO said the emergence of the new W-135 strain of meningitis in West Africa earlier had given renewed urgency to the search for a more effective and affordable vaccine.

An outbreak of W-135 in Burkina Faso, which began in February and continued until May, infected more than 12,000 people and killed almost 1,500.

Participants at the meeting recommended that countries in "the African meningitis belt", which stretches from Ethiopia to Senegal, be vigilant and detect meningitis cases at an early stage so that treatment could be made available quickly.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BURUNDI

a. Army officers imprisoned for Itaba killings: Two army officers have been imprisoned in connection with the killing of some 173 people in Itaba in the central province of Gitega, Net Press reported, Oct 3.

The officers, whom Net Press identified as Maj Budigoma and Lt Ngendakuriyo, are being held at the Gitega Central Prison. Their arrest followed "intense pressure" from Hutu parties in the country. "It is the first time that military officers have been imprisoned following army operations," Net Press, a Bujumbura news organ, reported. Speaking from Bujumbura on September 26, Amnesty International secretary-general Irene Khan said that all those killed in Itaba had been civilians, including women and children. She described the act as "cold-blooded", and said Burundian President Pierre Buyoya had promised that the state would prosecute those who had ordered the killings.

The massacre occurred, Sept 9, but was only made public several days later. It is unclear what prompted the killings although the army has been active in trying to put down a rebellion by Hutu fighters in parts of the country.

b. Torture of children widespread, says Amnesty: Human rights advocacy group Amnesty International has called for an end to the torture and ill-treatment of children which, it says, is "widespread" in Burundi.

"Age is no protection," says AI in a new report entitled "Poverty, Isolation and Ill-treatment, Juvenile Justice in Burundi". It said it had recorded scores of cases both at the hands of civilians and Burundi authorities, it was reported, Sept 25.

Children in detention who were interviewed by AI in March 2002 had been subjected to beatings using electric flexes, sticks and other weapons; beatings on the soles of feet and joints; some had been cut or stabbed with bayonets or knives; and others had been tied in excruciating positions for long periods of time.

The majority of the children interviewed displayed scars which appeared to be consistent with their stories, AI reported.

Children were also vulnerable to sexual abuse in detention, including rape and prostitution, because of the practice of detaining children and adults together. Boys appeared to be particularly at risk, AI said. It was "extremely rare" that authorities took any action against members of the security forces or civilians responsible for torture and ill-treatment. "Members of the security forces convicted of torturing detainees to death had, for instance, been allowed to continue in their jobs," AI reported.

(SOURCE: *New Vision*, Kampala)

CAMEROON

a. ICJ verdict set for Oct 10: The International Court of Justice (ICJ) announced, Oct 3, that it would deliver its judgment on the Bakassi peninsula, which has been the subject of a dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon, on October 10, in The Hague.

The court's ruling is binding and not subject to appeal, the court said in a statement. The case stems from a 1994 complaint filed by Cameroon, seeking a ruling over sovereignty of the Bakassi Peninsula and a determination of a maritime boundary between the two countries.

The territorial dispute has been a thorn in bilateral relations, as the countries at times have traded accusations. Each believes it is the rightful proprietor of the peninsula located in an oil-rich area. On September 6, President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria

and Paul Biya of Cameroon promised to abide by the ruling and to implement measures to respect it. Among others, they agreed to the demilitarization of the peninsula with the possibility of international observers to monitor the withdrawal of troops.

b. Troops deployed to stop separatist demonstration: Cameroonian troops, Oct 1, stopped a demonstration organised by the Southern Cameroon National Council (SCNC) to mark the "independence anniversary" of the English speaking Northwest and Southwest Provinces.

Sources said the government deployed troops in the towns of Tiko, Mutenguene, Limbe, Buea (southwest) and Kumbo, Bamenda (northwest). In the northwest, the prefect of Mezam, Bernard Bilai Okalia published an announcement forbidding any demonstration in his territory from September 10 to October 3.

Some SCNC leaders were arrested on the eve of October 1, including Chief Ayamba, Nfor Ngala Nfor (vice-president) and Albert Mukong (advisor) and Otun Ayangbang, regional representative of the movement in Mamfe (southwest).

A similar demonstration called in 2001 was heavily repressed in scuffles that left three people dead and many wounded. In December 1999, the group had attempted to seize the national radio station in Buea, 300 km southwest of Yaounde and declare independence.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

a. Court acquits former minister accused of treason: Former minister Jean-Jacques Demafouth was acquitted, Oct 7, of organising a coup against President Ange-Felix Patasse, state-owned Radio Centrafrique reported.

"The court did not see sufficient evidence that Jean-Jacques Demafouth did anything to breach the internal and public security in May 2001," Zacharie N'douba, the chairman of the National Criminal Court, said.

"This is a fair verdict. Everybody knew that there was no charge against Demafouth," Nicolas Tiangaye, one of Demafouth's three defence attorneys said.

Chief prosecutor Joseph Bindoumi had asked the court to sentence Demafouth to 20 years' imprisonment. Demafouth's trial, those of his 80 co-accused, and another 600 fugitives sentenced in absentia, was broadcast on government-owned radio. Former President Andre Kolingba and his three sons were among those sentenced to death, in absentia.

Demafouth has been released from prison where he has been held since his arrest August 2001 on suspicion of planning a coup with the help of the Jean-Pierre Bemba, the leader of the rebel Mouvement de Liberation du Congo in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The prosecutor's office contended that the coup had failed because Kolingba mounted his abortive overthrow bid first, on May 28, 2001.

[Background Info. Central African Republic, page 842:a]

b. Bangui signs convention to ban landmines: The Central African Republic (CAR) signed the international treaty to ban landmines in Geneva, Switzerland.

"We do not have land mines in CAR. We signed the convention as a bulwark for the future," Gen Ernest Betebangui, the chief of staff of the CAR army, said. He added that during several military crises in CAR, only antipersonnel grenades were used.

The signing of the convention by the CAR government came as a result of a campaign carried out by the United Nations through its local bureau, BONUCA. "The UN through the human rights section of BONUCA did a great job in pushing the CAR government to join the convention," Aissatou Laba Toure, head of the BONUCA information section, said, Sept 27.

CAR has suffered many internal military crises since the 1996- 1997 mutinies, including the May 28 coup d'etat attempt and the November 2001 armed resistance by Gen Francois Bozize, the former CAR army chief of staff. More recently, military clashes have erupted repeatedly along the border with Chad.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

CHAD

a. Government says rebels attacked airport: The Chadian ministry of information reported, Oct 4, that rebels had attacked an airport in the north, killing four soldiers and destroying two attack helicopters and a bomber.

The rebels of the Movement for Democracy and Justice in Chad (MDJT) were said to have taken advantage of bad weather resulting from sandstorm as a cover to attack the airport, Oct 3, in Faya, 620 miles north of the capital N'djamena, sources at the ministry said. President Idriss Deby, upon return from a Central Africa heads of state summit in Gabon, called the rebel attack "a terrorist attack" and a rejection of the government's desire to bring peace in the country.

The MDJT launched a rebellion against Deby's government in 1998, to protest what it deemed as an ineffective and "corrupt" regime. The rebellion was confined to the Tibesti region, bordering Libya to the north.

b. Rebel leader dies in hospital: The leader of Chad's main rebel organisation, Youssouf Togoimi, died of his wounds in a hospital in Tripoli, Libya, sources said, Sept 25.

Togoimi died, Sept 24, after being hospitalised for weeks for injuries sustained during a landmine accident, his political adviser, Youssouf Barkai, told the media.

According to Barkai, Togoimi, a former minister of defence under President Idriss Deby, had been improving in health and the circumstances of his death were still unclear.

However, in January 2002, after Libyan mediation, the government and MDJT signed a peace agreement that called for a ceasefire and an amnesty for the rebel fighters.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

COMORO ISLANDS

a. Economy to register 3 per cent growth: The Comoros is set to register an economic growth of 3 per cent in 2002-2003, while the year-on-year inflation is set to decline, it was reported, Sept 25.

The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) reported in its latest country briefing that the economic outlook for the Comoros is "not entirely gloomy".

"There has been some resumption of economic activity following the lifting of an embargo imposed by the Organisation of African Unity. Thus, after a long period of low or negative growth, the IMF is predicting a modest resumption of real GDP [gross domestic product] growth in 2002- 2003, reaching 3 per cent, while year-on-year inflation is projected to decline from 3.5 per cent at the end of 2001 to 3 percent at the end of 2003 ...

"Prospects for the price of vanilla - one of the country's main exports - have improved because of concern about the security of supplies from Madagascar (deemed politically unstable in the wake of the controversial presidential elections that took place in December 2001), and the foreign exchange balance is expected to follow the improving trend of recent years, as tourism receipts increase," the EIU said.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

CONGO (DR)

a. Government bans Rwandan rebel groups: The government of the Democratic Republic of Congo announced, Sept 24, a ban on all armed Rwandan groups operating in the country, and said their leaders had been declared *personae non grata* on Congolese territory.

A communique issued by Vital Kamerhe, the government's commissioner general, specifically referred to the Forces Democratiques de Liberation du Rwanda (FDLR), adding that its leaders had 72 hours to leave the country.

The measure was taken as part of the Pretoria accord, signed on July 30, between Presidents Paul Kagame of Rwanda and Joseph Kabila of the DRC which committed the latter to the disarmament and repatriation of Rwandan rebel groups in exchange for a Rwandan withdrawal from DRC territory.

"This group [FDLR] is among the factors disrupting the disarmament of armed groups," Kamerhe said.

Both the FDLR president, Ignace Ruanasaka, and its vice-president, Christophe Hakizabera, are reported to be residing in the DRC capital, Kinshasa. The FDLR claims to be a political and military group - which opposes the current Rwandan regime - with a base in Austria.

[Background Info. Congo (DR), page 794:a]

b. Genocide suspect arrested in Kinshasa: Col Tharcisse Renzaho, suspected of having committed crimes against humanity during the 1994 Rwandan genocide, was arrested in Kinshasa and has been transferred to the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), it was reported, Sept 30.

In October 2001, the London-based NGO African Rights accused the DRC of harbouring Renzaho. In an attempt to encourage the DRC government to cooperate with the ICTR, African Rights released a 26-page charge sheet detailing Renzaho's alleged crimes.

African Rights said that Renzaho's role as an officer commanding Congolese troops came to light during the fighting between government and rebel forces in Pweto, Katanga Province, in December 2000. Renzaho was then reported to be commuting between Kinshasa and Lubumbashi in the DRC.

African Rights said Renzaho was the governor of the Rwandan capital, Kigali, before and during the 1994 genocide, and that he was involved in the planning and execution of the slaughter of Tutsis and leading Hutu politicians.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Congo (DR), page 807: a]

DJIBOUTI

a. Govt says US has not asked permission to launch attack on Iraq: Djibouti said, Sept 25, the US has never asked for permission to use its territory to launch attacks against Iraq.

According to government spokesman Rifki Abdoulcaker Bamakhrama, Djibouti was "opposed to any action of the kind", the Djibouti news agency (ADI) reported.

"The United States has never asked the Djibouti government for permission to use its territory as a staging ground for attacks on Iraq or on any other country in the region," he said.

The presence of US and other western forces in Djibouti fell within the framework of the international coalition against terrorism, he added.

He described as "unfounded" reports by certain American newspapers that US forces stationed in Djibouti were preparing for an eventual attack on Iraq.

Recent press reports said hundreds of US troops have been conducting military exercises in Djibouti which has put its ports and airport at their disposal.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

EGYPT

a. Limestone slab found inside great pyramid: Scientists have discovered a new limestone slab or 'door' inside the Queen's Chamber in the northern shaft of the great pyramid of Cheops, the Egyptian Supreme Council of Antiquities announced, Sept 30.

The discovery was made by a team of scientists from the SCA and the National Geographic Society, SCA secretary general Zahi Hawas told reports. Hawas said that the newly discovered 'door' was identical to a slab discovered earlier in the southern shaft.

The same team of scientists recently penetrated this 'door' with the aid of a custom-built \$250,000-robot to discover what lay beyond, only to stumble on what appeared to be yet another stone slab. Discovery of the slab in the northern shaft brings to three the number of similar slabs discovered inside the great pyramid, according to the SCA.

The newly-discovered 'door' also has copper handles, in the same way as the one in the southern shaft has, is about the same size (20x20cm) and is located the same distance of 64 metres from the Queen's Chamber, as the other one.

(SOURCE: *Asian Age*, New Delhi)

ERITREA

a. Eritrea denies backing Sudanese rebels: Eritrea has denied backing Sudanese rebel forces which launched an attack in eastern Sudan recently.

Foreign minister Ali Said Abdella told a news conference in Asmara, Oct 6, that the claims by the Sudanese government were "a total lie with no supporting evidence".

According to Sudanese television, Sudanese foreign minister Mustafa Uthman Isma'il warned that his country would "confront the Eritrean aggression politically, militarily and through a media campaign".

An Eritrean government statement expressed "sadness and surprise" at the minister's remarks. "Sudan knows its opposition forces are operating from within Sudan," the statement said.

"They have their bases there." The statement added that Isma'il's comments "violate the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Eritrea and are a declaration of a situation of war".

The Asmara-based opposition National Democratic Alliance (NDA) - of which the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) is the biggest component - claimed responsibility for the attacks in which government forces lost control of the religiously significant town of Hamashkoreb in Kassala State.

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

ETHIOPIA

a. Massive relief needed, says govt: The Ethiopian government, Oct 7, warned that relief needs in 2003 will remain massive because of the devastating drought currently affecting the country.

Simon Mechale, commissioner of the government's Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (DPPC), said seven million people would need food in 2003 because rains "ended earlier than hoped".

"And yet, whichever scenario emerges, the relief needed in 2003 will remain massive," Simon said making an emergency food appeal.

He added that villagers across the country were showing serious signs of hunger. "While we can say now that the measures so far taken have helped minimise human suffering, the real challenge of averting a disaster is ahead of us," he said.

"Already there are signs of acute malnutrition in some areas requiring intensive feeding programmes and special health interventions," he said.

[Background Info. Ethiopia, page 783: a]

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

GHANA

a. Bill Clinton helps poor gain property titles: Former US President Bill Clinton has joined Ghana's President John Agyekum Kufuor at the launch in Accra of a foundation to help poor people register land and other property to gain access to loans, it was reported, Oct 8.

The ministry of justice established the Foundation for Building the Capital of the Poor for promoting reform of the country's property laws.

The initiative is supported by UNDP and inspired by the ideas of Professor Hernando de Soto of Peru, author of *The Mystery of Capital: Why capitalism thrives in the West and fails everywhere else*. He is head of the Institute for Liberty and Justice in Peru.

The foundation plans to set up a regional training centre in Accra to help other countries learn about its property reform programme. A premise of Professor de Soto is that the poor often have considerable property but lack title to it and thus cannot use their resources to get ahead.

President Kufuor said that the foundation aims to bring all lands and business assets into the formal economic sector through proper registration. "This should make land bankable property and give access to credit to title-holders," he said. "This could prove to be the vital part of the missing link that might help generate the prosperity we all yearn for."

(SOURCE: *Accra Mail*, Accra)

IVORY COAST

a. Ceasefire talks fail, says mediator: A member of a West African group mediating in Ivory Coast's crisis said, Oct 6, that talks on a ceasefire had ended in failure.

Togo's foreign minister, Koffi Panou, told reporters after a meeting with President Laurent Gbagbo that Ivory Coast's government could not accept that it would be treated on the same footing as rebels, who hold most of the north of the country.

"There will be no signature," Panou said. "We are going to go home and give our accounts to our heads of state."

ECOWAS failed to bring the two sides together for the signing of a ceasefire which had been planned for Oct 5. The rebels had agreed to a ceasefire to end an 18-day insurgency that has left hundreds dead.

Also, Oct 6, the Ivory Coast government troops attacked rebels besieging the city of Bouake after the government of President Laurent Gbagbo failed to sign a ceasefire.

Soldiers from the country's former colonial master, France, said the government army had sent heavy reinforcements to Bouake.

Heavy fighting in Bouake: Heavy fighting continued, Oct 7, in the town of Bouake as the national army launched a major offensive to regain control of the town from rebel soldiers.

The fighting started, Oct 6, after President Laurent Gbagbo refused to sign a ceasefire agreement proposed by a six-member mediation team from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The mediators left for their respective countries.

The French government was reported to have said that "there is no military solution to the crisis". Radio France International, Oct 7, quoted Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin as saying Gbagbo should sign the proposed ceasefire. Gbagbo's spokesman Alain Toussaint however insisted that Gbagbo was not opposed to a cease-fire.

France is providing "logistical" support, including transportation and communication equipment to the Ivorian armed forces.

The insurrection, first reported as a mutiny, then a coup d'etat, started on the night of September 19. Since then, more than 2,000 foreign nationals have been evacuated from Bouake and Korhogo by French and US troops.

[Background Info. Ivory Coast, page 844:a]

b. Cocoa price hits 16-year high amid unrest: The price of cocoa, country's primary export, jumped to its highest level in 16 years, Sept 28, in a clear indication that the current crisis in the world's leading producer can be expected to affect supplies.

Following what the Ivorian authorities called an attempted coup on September 19 and the ensuing violent military uprising, cocoa prices hit their highest mark since September 1986. At the New York Board of Trade, cocoa for delivery in December rose to \$2,174 per tonne during the week before profit-taking lowered the figure to \$2,151.

The daily price calculated by the International Cocoa Organization by averaging London and New York quotations rose to \$2,246.81, Sept 26, dropping slightly, Sept 27, to \$2,244.27 per tonne.

Ivory Coast is the world's number one cocoa grower, supplying 40 per cent of the international market. Analysts say the next three months are vital, as the bulk of the crop is shipped between October and the end of December.

Shortages of cocoa had already sharply driven prices up in 2002, by about 60 per cent. Another year of production deficit could exacerbate poor supplies of cocoa beans for the third consecutive year. Fuel shortages in Ivory Coast that resulted from a three-pronged attack on three cities by dissident soldiers have severely affected cocoa purchases.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

KENYA

a. 180 air traffic controllers reinstated: Some 180 air traffic controllers sacked six months ago for going on strike have been reinstated, it was reported, Oct 4.

Transport and telecommunications minister Musalia Mudavadi said he was reviewing appeal cases by 60 others.

Responding to appeals by four members that he reinstate all the remaining workers, the minister said each case was being considered on merit.

The minister said so soon after Parliament passed the Civil Aviation (Amendment) Bill, which seeks to create the Civil Aviation Authority, which was the major bone of contention when the workers went on strike.

The Authority will regulate and control civil aviation, which will be independent from the ministry of transport and communication. With the passing of the Bill, Oct 3, an autonomous body would be formed and workers' benefits would not be pegged to the civil service rates.

b. Lawyers sign protest note over judiciary's gag order: Lawyers opposed to a move to block debate on Constitutional reforms have signed a protest note to Chief Justice Bernard Chunga.

More than 1,000 lawyers, Sept 30, signed the petition in which they reaffirmed their support for the Constitution of Kenya

Review Commission. They asked Kenyans to ignore "any unlawful orders from the Judiciary and others who may attempt to derail the process".

They condemned, "in the strongest words," the move by Appeal Court judge, Justice Muija ole Keiwua and High Court judge, Justice Joseph Vitalis Juma, who are seeking to exclude the Judiciary from the constitutional reforms. They also censured colleagues Tom O. K'Opere and John Njongoro who are seeking to stop the drafting of the constitution.

The petition said: "We do hereby condemn these actions of some members of the judiciary and the bar who are attempting to use the judiciary to interfere with the drafting of a new constitution..."

The petition was initiated by the International Commission of Jurists (Kenya) led by Mohammed Nyaoga. K'Opere was invited to sign up but declined.

Among the first to sign were Nyaoga, Ms Mary Wangari, Otiende Amollo, Milton Makhandia, Wilfred Nderitu, Swaleh Kanyeki, Kanyi Kimondo and Ms Kagwiria Mbogori.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

LIBERIA

a. Woman elected as president pro tempore: Liberia's first female president pro tempore of the Senate, Grace B. Minor, said, Oct 1, her ascendancy to the position is a challenge to Liberian women as they look forward to gender equality in government and the society.

"Our ascendancy to this position should be regarded also as a challenge to afford women the opportunity to contribute immensely in steering the affairs of the Honorable House of the Liberian Senate; thereby, putting into place those requisite norms for making laws to suit our situation," the president pro tempore said.

b. 14,000 repatriated to Sierra Leone: About 14,000 Sierra Leonean refugees in Liberia have been repatriated since February 2002, UNHCR representative Moses Okelo said, Oct 7.

According to Okelo, the last group of 110 were repatriated, Sept 30, and that the refugees are being sent home by sea.

He, however, told reporters that there are about 27,000 Sierra Leonean refugees still in Liberia.

Asked why such a huge number is still in the country and what is being done by the UNHCR to repatriate them, Okelo replied "the international law governing repatriation is voluntary, and once those who are still here feel that their respective areas are safe enough for them to return, we will repatriate them."

The UNHCR, he said, will still cater to the refugees while in Liberia until they decide to go home.

c. Churches appeal for emergency relief: The non-governmental organization Action by Churches Together (ACT) appealed, Oct 3, for US \$1.6 million to provide emergency relief to at least 30,000 internally displaced Liberians.

The aid, ACT said, would support Lutheran World Federation and the World Service to provide shelter, water and sanitation,

non-food and food items such as high protein foods to malnourished children, psychosocial counseling and create awareness for the prevention of sexual exploitation of 6,000 women and girl children.

"Fighting between the security forces of the Liberian government and dissidents in Lofa, Gbarpolu, Bomi, Cape Mount, and Bong counties has once more created massive displacement of people. Around 130,000 persons have settled in 14 camps in the western suburbs of Monrovia, in Bong, Kakata, Margibi, Grand Bassa, and Nimba counties," ACT said.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

LIBYA

a. Fuel supply to Zimbabwe stopped: Zimbabwe's fuel crisis intensified after Libya turned off its supply following non-payment, it was reported, Oct 6.

Zimbabwe has experienced recurrent fuel shortages and Libya has supplied 70% of Harare's fuel needs since August 2001.

President Robert Mugabe recently visited Tripoli to hammer out a new deal with Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi. Although Mugabe tried to renew the \$360-million (about R3.6-billion) deal with Gaddafi, the Libyan oil company TamOil, in which the Libyan government is a major shareholder, called in its \$63-million debt.

TamOil is believed to have told Mugabe that fuel deliveries would resume only upon payment. The fuel crisis is set to worsen as financing agreements signed with other suppliers expire in a fortnight - and the chances of their renewal are minimal because of Zimbabwe's foreign exchange shortage.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Libya, page 821:a]

MALAWI

a. EC responds to hunger crisis: The European Commission [EC] has announced that it would provide Malawi with 90,000 metric tonnes of food aid worth 29 million euro to help alleviate the suffering of people in the face of the unfolding food crisis.

In a press release, the commission said, Sept 30, it started distributing the food assistance in April and will continue until the next harvest season in May, 2003. The food response has been broken into two parts with the first phase running from April to September 2002, and the other from September 2002 to May 2003.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MAURITANIA

a. WFP appeal for food aid: The World Food Programme has once again reminded the international community to come to the aid of Mauritania where food shortage, induced by lack of rain, is threatening thousands of people.

According to WFP regional director for West Africa, Manuel da Silva, 750,000 Mauriticians are affected by lack of food. Consequently there is a growing rate of malnutrition, he said,

Oct 5.. WFP conducted in September wheat distribution in the six most affected regions. It still expects to receive funding to feed all those in need. The UN agency had so far received 30 per cent of the US \$7.5 million it had appealed for.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MOROCCO

a. Radicals make gains in polls: A fundamentalist party that wants to apply Islamic laws in Morocco performed strongly in elections, government officials said, Sept 29.

A party leader said they expected to double their seats in Parliament.

A full 12 hours after polling stations closed, Sept 27, official results were still unavailable. Just a few bleary-eyed reporters and officials remained at a party that the interior ministry threw, Sept 27, to announce election results—only for no official figures to emerge. But government officials said the Justice and Development Party, the only Islamic group in Parliament, registered strong gains. The PJD previously had 14 seats in the legislature's 325-seat Lower House.

"We think we made a very visible advance," said a PJD leader, Mustapha Ramid, in a telephone interview.

"We'll have double the number of lawmakers, or more". Ramid said that long-term, his party wants to see the application of Islamic law in Morocco. But he also said they would only seek change from within the potential system.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, Madras)

Background Info. Morocco, page 726:a]

MOZAMBIQUE

a. Manecas Daniel re-elected president of PRD: Manecas Daniel was re-elected president of the Democratic Renewal Party (PRD), Sept 29, at the end of a congress held in the central Mozambican city of Chimoio.

The PRD is one of the ten minor parties allied to the former rebel movement Renamo in the electoral union coalition. Recently, there has been a split between supporters of Daniel, and of the former PRD general secretary, Lourenco Juma.

Juma challenged Daniel for the leadership, but, according to the report in Maputo daily paper *Noticias*, Daniel received the votes of 40 congress delegates to just 20 for Juma. In his victory speech, Daniel promised that he would expand the political base of the party, and win new members. He also pledged that the PRD would remain in parliament and would be represented in all 33 municipal assemblies.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

NAMIBIA

a. Anti-graft Bill delayed again: SWAPO, Oct 3, accused the Congress of Democrats (CoD) of blocking the Anti-corruption Bill when justice minister Ngarikutuke Tjirange's attempts to pass it without following procedures were thwarted.

A volley of accusations aimed at the CoD ensued after Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly Willem Konjore ruled that the Bill has lapsed and may only be reintroduced in November.

Konjore said the Bill may only be reintroduced in the National Assembly at the earliest on November 5.

Confusion reigned in the National Assembly, Oct 2, when without warning Tjirange reintroduced the Anti-corruption Bill which the National Council had rejected earlier.

The justice minister had just begun when Nora Schimming-Chase of the CoD interrupted. He dismissed most of the National Council's reasons for rejecting the Bill.

With regard to the status of the Bill the Deputy Speaker said the Bill had lapsed in terms of article 75 (5) (b) of the Constitution "as the motion by honourable minister of justice to reaffirm the principle by a two-thirds majority has not been carried".

(SOURCE: *Namibian*, Windhoek)

NIGERIA

a. Anti-graft panel gets \$300m foreign aid: The Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) has received a \$300 million foreign assistance to prosecute its assignment, chairman of the commission, Justice Mustapha Adebayo Akanbi, said, Oct 7.

Fielding questions from newsmen in Ilorin, Akanbi said that the assistance, which was time - specific, has to be expended before December 2002 to give serious impetus to its anti-corruption crusade. The grant reiterated that the anti-corruption crusade must be pursued to a logical end, if the rejuvenation of the country from the morass of corruption could be achieved.

Akanbi maintained that the commission was one of the best things that have happened to the country and took exception to the criticism of Rev. Sunday Mbang that the ICPC has done nothing. The chairman said the commission has investigated several cases, while 21 people have been prosecuted.

Akanbi explained that section 27 of the Act setting up the ICPC states that they can only commence investigation into any allegation that was brought to their attention "either in writing or verbally".

"Without somebody reporting to us there is nothing we can do", he said.

b. Plane crash survivor flown to Germany: The only surviving crew member of the May 4 Executive Airline Services (EAS) plane crash in Kano, which claimed about 100 lives, Miss Naomi Ukpog, was flown to Cologne, Germany, Oct 6, for treatment.

She had sustained multiple injuries in the air mishap and had been admitted at the Dala Orthopaedic Hospital since.

Having been under the hospital's care in the past five months without much improvement, EAS through its insurers, decided to fly her out for better treatment in Germany.

Miss Ukpog was flown into the domestic wing of the Murtala Muhammed Airport via an IRS Airlines aircraft on crutches as her two legs reportedly suffered severe injury during the air mishap.

On arrival at the airport, anxious family members, her colleagues, well wishers and staff of EAS were on hand to welcome her and bid her farewell to Germany for treatment.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SENEGAL

a. 1,000 drowned as ferry capsizes: Two Senegalese ministers have resigned after the ferry catastrophe, Sept 26, which cost the lives of an estimated 1,000 passengers.

Official figures put the number of survivors at just 64, it was reported, Oct 2.

President Abdoulaye Wade accepted the resignations of his transport minister, Youssouph Sakho, and the minister responsible for the armed forces, Youba Sambou.

The Senegalese navy operated the state-run ferry, *The Joola*, which was designed to hold 550 passengers. But on the night it capsized, in stormy weather, the overcrowded vessel was reported to be carrying double its load. The official number of passengers aboard has been revised upwards from 800 to 1,034.

Many schoolchildren and students perished aboard the ferry. They were heading from the southern port city of Ziguinchor, in the troubled Casamance region, to start a new academic year in the capital Dakar. Sea journeys have become the preferred form of travel, rather than hazardous road transport, because of the low-level 20-year rebellion in the region. The ferry had only recently gone back into service, after a year of repairs, but questions have been asked about its seaworthiness and maintenance.

Wade accepted the blame for the disaster, the worst maritime tragedy in Senegal's 42-year history.

He said the sinking of *The Joola* was due to an "accumulation of errors," adding that the ferry was designed to travel on lakes and was inappropriate for ocean-going voyages on the high seas.

Annan expresses condolences to victims of disaster: UN Secretary General Kofi Annan expressed condolences, Sept 28, to the victims feared drowned after a ferry capsized off the coast of west Africa.

"The secretary general is deeply saddened by the news that hundreds of people are feared drowned after a Senegalese passenger ferry capsized off the coast of Gambia in a violent storm," UN spokesman Fred Eckhard said in a statement.

"He expresses his heartfelt condolences to the government, families and friends of the victims."

b. 12 cases of yellow fever reported: The Senegalese ministry of health has reported some 12 cases of yellow fever particularly in the central Mbak district, which includes the city of Touba with 800,000 inhabitants, the World Health Organization (WHO) said, Oct 7.

The ministry of health, WHO added, had started a vaccination campaign on October 1. A vector control campaign was also being carried out within the city. A national investigation team and entomologists from the Institut Pasteur, Dakar, would be travelling to Touba to assess the outbreak.

WHO said it had offered Senegal assistance for implementation of the vaccination campaign, surveillance and other containment measures.

Yellow fever, according to WHO, is an epidemic viral disease in Africa and the Americas. The "yellow" in the name is explained by the jaundice that affects some patients. There is no specific treatment for yellow fever and vaccination is the most important measure for prevention.

Between 1939 and 1952 yellow fever cases almost vanished from French West Africa after intensive vaccination campaigns.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SIERRA LEONE

a. Council extends UN mission by 6 months: The United Nations Security Council, Sept 24, unanimously adopted a resolution extending the mandate of the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) by six months.

The mission's mandate was to expire on September 30.

The council's move followed recent proposals by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to adjust the mission's mandate and eventually downsize the operation, as the first step towards a gradual handover of security and other responsibilities to the government of Sierra Leone.

The 15-member Security Council had also acted in support of the Sierra Leonean government's efforts to continue building on the peace process, according to a UN statement, Sept 24.

The council urged UNAMSIL to complete the first two phases of Annan's plan, the statement said.

This would include UNAMSIL achieving a reduction of 4,500 UN peacekeepers within eight months, taking into account the necessary arrangements that need to be completed, it added.

The Security Council emphasised that developing the administrative capacities of the Sierra Leonean government (particularly an effective and sustainable police force, army, penal system and independent judiciary) was essential to long-term peace and development.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Sierra Leone, page 632:a]

SOMALIA

a. President sends back controversial media law: The President of the Transitional National Government (TNG), Abdiqassim Salad Hassan, has declined to sign a controversial media law passed by the Transitional National Assembly (TNA), information minister Abdirahman Ibbi said, Oct 2.

Muhammad Haji Ingris of the daily *Ayaamaha* newspaper said that "90 percent of print and broadcast journalists downed their tools today (Oct 2) to express their displeasure with this law". The so-called Press Law restricting the activities of the press was passed three days ago, he said.

"If it becomes law as it is, it will be one of the most draconian press laws in the world," said Muhammad.

The journalists' basic complaint is that the law will make it illegal to cover information on government secrets and criticism of government officials, he said.

"As it is, if I were to report on financial scandals involving the government or senior officials, I would be violating the law," Muhammad said. "This is unacceptable and that is why we are protesting."

Ibbi said the President had set up a committee of lawyers, journalists and senior officials to meet with the journalists "and address their grievances".

Journalists body protests: Reporters Without Borders protested, Oct 3, against the adoption by parliament of a law which curbs the freedom of journalists to do their job.

"The authorities say the new law is to deal with the excesses of some media, but the measure threatens the entire press," said Reporters Without Borders secretary-general Robert Minard in a letter to the head of the Transitional National Government, Abdiasim Salad Hassan.

"In a country in the process of wholesale reconstruction such as Somalia, the authorities must emphatically encourage the growth of a free, diverse and independent media instead of trying to clamp down on it," he said.

All of Somalia's privately-owned media (about 20 newspapers, a dozen radio and TV stations and several Internet websites) began a strike on October 2, to protest against the new law, which was passed on September 28. They said they would no longer report official press releases if the government did not give way. The new law bans publication or broadcast of anything that goes against the "common interests" of the country, without defining what that is. Media which contravene the measure risk withdrawal of their operating licences.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Somalia, page 836:c]

SOUTH AFRICA

a. Police unearth major arms cache: Police anti-terrorism investigators unearthed a major arms cache in Limpopo, Oct 4, in their ongoing probe into a right wing plot to spark a race war and topple the government.

The munitions cache includes 16 of the largest home-made cylinder bombs yet found in South Africa, as well as dozens of home-made handgrenades, and crates of ammunition for shotguns, 9mm pistols and military-issue R1 and R4 assault rifles. National police spokesman director Phuti Setati refused to say whether any of the alleged plotters were arrested on the Modimolle (Nylstroom) farm where the cache was discovered.

He did, however, say the breakthrough was a major blow to the shadowy 'Boeremag' group believed to be behind aborted plans to disrupt the recent World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Sandton, Johannesburg, as part of a wider plot to overthrow the government. "These weapons are powerful enough to kill thousands of innocent people."

b. More than 100 families homeless after storms: Limpopo's local government department, Oct 1, sent a team of officials to assess hailstorm damage in three municipalities.

Letaba, Tzaneen and Giyani were lashed by storms, Sept 30 night, leaving more than 100 families homeless. Local government spokesman Ishmael Malale said the department would decide how it could help the storm victims after it received a report from the officials.

"We've provided tents and blankets, and will continue sending food parcels for the next 14 days until the families are settled," Malale said. "The department will also look at arranging houses for the families [to move into]," he added.

Greater Letaba municipality mayor Makoma Rasekgale said the storms belted 11 villages in her municipality and damaging 111 houses, 11 classrooms in three schools and injured two people.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

SUDAN

a. Extension of defence protocol delayed: The Sudanese and Ugandan governments have delayed extending a defence protocol because of the recent upsurge in fighting between the Khartoum authorities and rebels in southern Sudan.

Siajudin Hamid, the charge d'affaires at the Sudanese embassy in the Ugandan capital Kampala said, Oct 3, the two governments were still holding consultations on terms for extending the protocol. The document, signed in March, permitted the Ugandan army to pursue the Ugandan rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) inside Sudan, following improved relations between the two countries.

"The parties are still negotiating the new terms of extension of the protocol, which will be finalised in the next few days," Hamid said. The Ugandan authorities confirmed recently that defence minister Amama Mbabazi had travelled to Khartoum to negotiate a possible extension of the protocol, which expired on 14 September.

Fighting escalated in southern Sudan in September after the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) seized the key town of Torit from government control.

The Sudanese army bombed a Ugandan military camp in southern Sudan recently which it said was situated close to SPLA targets. Speculation is mounting of rising tension between Sudan and Uganda, although the authorities have refused to comment.

Sudan bombs Kony rebels: The Sudanese army pounded the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels in southern Sudan, killing 12 fighters, it was reported, Oct 3.

The Sudanese ambassador to Uganda, Sirajuddin Hamid Yousuf, said at least 10 rebels, including their commander Tabuley, were critically injured in the fighting which took place near Nisitu, about 20 miles south of Juba.

"It was an offensive by them against our troops but they received a hard blow from our forces," said Sirajuddin. He said three Sudanese soldiers were wounded.

"Our forces also recovered a lot of arms and ammunition from them," Sirajuddin said, adding that the rebels were now desperate for food and arms. The Sudanese army joined the hunt for the LRA following a protocol signed in March 2002 which allowed the UPDF to carry out search and destroy operations inside southern Sudan.

Sudanese President Omar el-Bashir said in July that his forces joined the hunt because Kony had rejected a political solution.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Sudan, page 837:a]

TANZANIA

a. Leaders push for peace in Rwanda: With little prospect of a ceasefire between the government and the rebels in Burundi's nine-year civil war, more than a dozen African leaders began their final regional summit, Oct 6, aimed at ending the conflict.

The South African Deputy President, Jacob Zuma addressed the summit, Oct 7. Fighting between Burundi government troops and several rebels groups from the Hutu majority has been on the rise in the past months, and rebel attacks on the outskirts of the capital, Bujumbura, more frequent.

The Ugandan President, Yoweri Museveni, chaired the 14-nation regional Great Lakes Initiative on Burundi. At least 10 Presidents, including the South African leader, Thabo Mbeki, and the former President, Nelson Mandela, have confirmed their attendance.

Representatives from the European Union, which has been funding much of the Burundi peace process, and the Africa Union also will attend.

A three-year transitional government set up in November 2000 after political talks mediated by Mandela in Arusha, Tanzania, is implementing a power-sharing agreement between Hutu parties and those of the minority Tutsis. But the rebels did not take part in the talks, and subsequent splits in the two main groups have stymied attempts to secure a ceasefire.

[Background Info. Tanzania, page 766:a]

b. SAA, Air Tanzania sign deal: SA Airways (SAA) concluded a deal to acquire a 49% stake in Tanzania's state-owned airline, Air Tanzania, it was reported, Oct 7.

The move is the first acquisition by SAA of a stake in a foreign carrier, and marks a milestone in the airline's strategy of expanding its network in Africa through regional hubs in the eastern, western and southern parts of Africa.

The deal forms part of Tanzania's privatisation programme, and has yet to be approved by the Tanzanian government, according to SAA. Approval was expected by the end of October, SAA spokesman Rich Mkhondo said.

SAA was chosen by the Tanzanian Parastatal Sector Reform Commission as the winning bidder ahead of Kenya Airways and Emirates. The remainder of the shareholding in Air Tanzania was likely to be acquired by a Tanzanian organisation, which would be called on to partner SAA. SAA regarded the \$20m price tag as reasonable and affordable, Mkhondo said.

c. Foreign investment flow improves: Tanzania's Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows have increased, improving the country's position from number 16 to 12 on the FDI list.

This is in spite of the fact that the whole of Africa received only 2 per cent of total global inflows in 2001 while global direct investment plunged by 51 percent from \$1.3 trillion in 2000 to

\$735 million in 2001. According to the latest World Investment Report 2002 (WIR 2002), Tanzania's inward FDI stock as of 2001 reached a record high of \$1.404bn.

"The United Republic of Tanzania is a new entrant in the FDI field," says the document. Tanzania's efforts to harness FDI to its development process dates back to 1985, when the country initiated the process of transition from a centrally planned to a market-based economy. However, it was only in the second half of the 1990s that the economic situation improved.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi and *Hindu*, Madras)

TUNISIA

a. Special probe into drowning of illegal immigrants: A special enquiry and fact-finding commission was set up in Tunisia to look up the circumstances of the drowning of 14 Tunisian nationals off the Italian coast, it was reported, Sept 24.

The tragic accident occurred as the group of Tunisian young people were trying to cross into Italy illegally.

The probe was decided by President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali after receiving Habib Ben Yahia, minister of foreign affairs, and Hedi M'henni, minister of the interior and local development, and Bechir Tekkari, minister of justice and human rights.

The special commission will be tasked with "investigating the circumstances of the incident and defining the responsibilities in this regard". It will also "undertake the necessary contacts with Italian authorities so as to coordinate the ongoing enquiry into the catastrophe and take the necessary measures against those responsible".

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

UGANDA

a. LRA attacks another refugee camp in the north: Uganda's rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has attacked a Sudanese refugee camp, for the second time in 2002, killing five government soldiers and burning about 65 huts.

According to media reports from Uganda, about 50 LRA fighters on October 3 attacked the Maaji refugee settlement in the northern Adjumani district. At least five soldiers and eight rebels were killed in the attack. Uganda's independent *Monitor* daily reported. A senior army officer had been arrested for having been drunk at the time of the attack, the paper reported.

Bushra Malik, a spokesman for the UN refugee agency UNHCR in Kampala, said that the agency was still carrying out assessments in the field to gauge the impact of the attack, and would soon release a report on the situation in the camp.

Maaji is part of a broader refugee settlement programme in the Adjumani and Moyo districts, which house a combined total of 81,000 Sudanese refugees. In July, the LRA attacked Maaji camp, killing five refugees and a government soldier, and burning 127 huts and classrooms before looting the dispensary.

The LRA, led by Joseph Kony, wants to replace President Yoweri Museveni's government with one based on the Biblical Ten Commandments. Since June 2002, it has stepped up attacks in northern Uganda.

The renewed attacks, which have been characterised by killing of civilians, abductions, burning and looting of property, followed the signing in March of an agreement according to which the Sudanese government permitted the Ugandan army to pursue the LRA in Sudanese territory.

[Background Info. Uganda, page 850:a]

b. Ex-CIA boss seeks Uganda support to fight Saddam: Former CIA director James Woolsey has called upon Uganda to give moral support to President George Bush's efforts to overthrow Iraq's President Saddam Hussein.

Woolsey who was recently addressing 24 journalists from 23 different countries including Uganda on the theme; "The role of Intelligence agencies", said Saddam is a mad man who need not only to disarm but also to be overthrown.

The journalists were participants in a three-week International Visitor project for Investigative Journalists sponsored by US which ended on Sept 29 in Philadelphia city.

"Saddam should be overthrown now and we need moral support of not only Uganda but all African Countries. The more days we give this beast who has killed thousands of his people, the more destructive weapons he continues to manufacture and he intends to use them on soft targets in Africa and elsewhere," Woolsey said. He said that some of Saddam's close relatives have confirmed to US Intelligence that actually Saddam is busy manufacturing chemical, and other dangerous weapons in preparation for war.

Woolsey who served in the Bill Clinton regime was however doubtful of the UN re-inspection proposal in Iraq saying that this exercise which failed in the 1990s can not materialise now.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

ZAMBIA

a. Chiluba urged to admit vote rigging: Boldly proclaiming a decisive and historic battle against corruption, the Zambian government is locked in a bitter struggle with most of the cabinet it replaced in January, it was reported, Oct 4.

However, the way the government is going about its anti-corruption campaign has raised questions of whether it is not an old-fashioned power struggle instead.

Recently, Michael Sata, a powerful minister during Frederick Chiluba's presidency and now an opposition party leader, publicly urged Chiluba to testify in the Supreme Court that he rigged the December 2001 presidential election to ensure the victory of the current President, Patrick Levy Mwanawasa.

Mwanawasa, of the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), wants Chiluba prosecuted for alleged massive embezzlement during his time in office and in a bid to stop him Chiluba may indeed testify, increasing the chances that the Supreme Court will annul the election result and order a fresh poll.

Sata wants Chiluba to testify in the case brought by three losing candidates in the 2001 presidential election for the results to be overturned. Anderson Mazoka of the opposition United Party for National Development (UPND) officially lost to Mwanawasa by only 34000 votes, but it is widely believed that he would have won but for systematic rigging by the MMD.

Mazoka testified in September that at least 42-billion kwacha (about R100-million) of state money was disbursed to MMD campaign managers before the election, chiefs were paid extra to deliver their subjects' votes to the MMD, and that polling stations were deliberately closed early in areas where Mazoka enjoys strong support.

(SOURCE: *Post*, Lusaka)

[Background Info. Zambia, page 827:a]

ZIMBABWE

a. Tough talk, no action at SADC summit: An annual summit of southern African leaders recently talked tough on resolving Zimbabwe's political and economic crisis, but the group was hamstrung by its ambivalence.

The three-day summit of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) kicked off in Angola's capital Luanda, Sept 30, with an unprecedented public chastising of Zimbabwe's failure to end its crisis, but the analysts said that was probably all that the divided meeting would achieve.

Officially Zimbabwe was not on the conference's agenda, but some SADC trade and foreign ministers publicly made known that the time had come for Zimbabwe to shape up, indicating that they would vigorously convey the message in their closed-door talks.

"Clearly we have to resolve the governance issues in the region," Mauritian Foreign Minister Anil Gayan said at the start of the meeting.

"We cannot be punished for the mistakes of one country - Zimbabwe. We shall be asking that they shape up," he said in a rare condemnation of a crisis that has crippled Zimbabwe, triggered the fall of South Africa's currency and hit crucial tourism across the region.

[Background Info. Zimbabwe, page 836:a]

b. MDC MP Munyanyi arrested: MDC MP for Mbare East Tichaona Munyanyi was arrested, Oct 1, in connection with the murder of a senior Zanu-PF official in August.

Police chief spokesman Assistant Commissioner Wayne Bvudzijena said the legislator was picked up for questioning in Harare in connection with the murder of Cde Alick Khan Manjengwa who was shot and killed by suspected MDC members. Some MDC members have appeared in court on allegations of murdering Cde Manjengwa.

Cde Manjengwa was shot once below the left eye and died on the spot. He was shot while walking along a corridor at Nenyere Flats in Mbare on his way to a friend's flat after attending a meeting with some Zanu-PF youths in one of the block of flats, according to police. Asst Comm Bvudzijena said Munyanyi was still in police custody.

[Background Info. Zimbabwe, page 850:a]

c. Air Zimbabwe faces flight ban over safety: Aviation experts fear that if the ongoing strike by Air Zimbabwe engineers continues, the airline monitoring body, the Civil Aviation Authority Zimbabwe (CAAZ), may be degraded by other global aviation bodies. Oct 2

That could in turn lead to the cancellation of Air Zimbabwe flights from a number of major international routes.

But Karikoga Kaseke, the CAAZ chief executive officer, dismissed the fears of cancellation of Air Zimbabwe's international flights, saying the airline met international safety standards despite the engineers' strike. Kaseke said: "No one else is qualified to tell the world if Air Zimbabwe has compromised its standards, except myself as the boss of CAAZ."

"As far as we are concerned, the workers filling in for the striking engineers are doing a good job and we are confident everything is going on well."

The CAAZ supervises the safety capacities of all airlines in Zimbabwe. Engineers who spoke to *The Daily News*, Oct 1, said there was a possibility Air Zimbabwe might be banned from travelling to key international destinations by other countries who may fear for the safety of their people.

"It is a subject countries to which we fly will soon raise, because no respectable national airline can go for three weeks without a competent and properly registered work force of engineers."

(SOURCE: *Independent*, Harare)

ANALYSIS

Ceausescu's legacy in CAR

In sub-Saharan Africa one hardly expects to find a brothel run by two female engineers from Bucharest. But in pockmarked Bangui, capital of the Central African Republic, Alexia and Alexandria entertain many traders and civil servants for a price.

Even by the standards of this impoverished country, their surroundings are no boudoir. At the heavily fortified villa, nylon curtains do little to keep out huge flies while glass crunches uncomfortably under foot.

Running such an establishment was not a lifelong ambition, explains Alexia, but when one woman's husband died and the other's husband left, they had nothing. "We solve our problems in the same way as some Central African women," she says.

A community of Romanians has been stranded in this former French colony since the end of communism. They arrived in the 1970s and 80s because of a bizarre friendship between Jean-Bedel Bokassa, who crowned himself emperor of the Central African Republic in 1977, and Romania's Nicolae Ceausescu.

Bokassa started courting Romania's favour in the 1970s, feting Ceausescu with diamonds. (This country is poor but diamonds are plentiful). He sealed their friendship in 1973 by marrying a Romanian dancer, Gabriella Drimba, whom he spotted in Bucharest and brought to the mango tree-lined capital.

While Drimba languished in a palace that Bokassa had built for her the leader went ahead with a number of ventures with his European partner. Romanian lecturers taught at Bangui University. The Republic's police forces was whisked off for training in Bucharest. A forestry company formed by the two countries stripped the bush of hardwoods for shipment to Europe. Central African students sent to study in Bucharest married Romanian women and brought them back to Bangui.

"For weeks, I couldn't eat the food my husband's family ate. I lived off fruit. But I was in love," sighs the Romanian honorary counsel. Her compatriot remembers being taken by her Central African husband to their roofless marital home in the bush.

When Ceausescu was executed in 1990, cooperation between the allies ceased and most Romanians left. But a few stayed on, especially women who had married Central Africans. Not all share the dismal fate of Alexia and Alexandria. Some work in hotels and at the telephone company, or test blood at the Pasteur Institute. "To return often meant leaving children behind. These women were torn," says Polly Strong, a US missionary. The dilemma led several women to commit suicide.

A decade ago most Romanians had the money to leave. But a drastic decline in the country's economy, partly due to the withdrawal of French assistance, means that many can no longer pay for an air ticket out. Denise Cristodor, an accountant for a French supermarket, is saving hard. "It's as difficult for us to go to Romania as it would be for a Central African," she says.

In the heart of the continent, with an abundance of natural resources including diamonds, uranium and possibly oil, the Central African Republic has never been short of international suitors. North Korea built the country's national parliament. Chinese officials are busy ensuring that the ruling party wins the local elections, and robed Kuwaitis fly in on their private jets to buy briefcases of diamonds.

Libya's leader, Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, sent troops in 2001 to help President Ange Eelix Patasse fight off a coup attempt. When not blasting Arabic pop from under the palm trees, these "peacekeepers" cruise around in pick-ups emblazoned with the word "Censad", Gaddafi's new alliance of central and north African states. It was thought that he shored up the president as part of his widely mocked plans for a "United States of Africa". But the colonel has had the last laugh. He recently signed an agreement to exploit the country's diamond and oil resources for 99 years.

—Lucy Jones in *Guardian Weekly*, reproduced in *Deccan Herald*, Bangalore, Oct 19, 2002.

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ANGOLA

a. Billion-dollar scandal: Angola is reeling under a financial scandal after it was discovered that \$1 billion had disappeared from government coffers in 2001, it was reported, Oct 21.

In a bluntly worded internal report, the International Monetary Fund said that over the past five years, more than \$4 billion had gone missing in the country. The Angolan government has denied the accusations. But according to Justin Pearce, the BBC's Luanda correspondent, the IMF report noted there had been little progress in good governance and fiscal transparency.

"The report does not mention where the missing money has gone," the BBC reported, "but its overview of the political and economic situation in the country speaks of extensive corruption as one of the challenges faced by the government."

The report also accused Sonangol, the state-owned oil company, of illegal foreign-currency transactions, suggesting it had received foreign oil payments directly rather than via the central bank.

b. UNITA travel ban to be lifted, sanctions reviewed: The UN Security Council has decided to lift the travel ban on UNITA from November 14, 2002.

The Security Council also extended the mandate of a panel monitoring sanctions against the UNITA by two months, it was reported, Oct 21.

The "monitoring mechanism" was asked to detail plans for consultations in Angola with representatives of both the government and UNITA "with a view to ... contributing towards a full review by the Council of the measures imposed against UNITA once the peace process has been completed," a UN statement said.

Particular attention will be given to tracking down UNITA funds and financial resources that were frozen under sanctions, as well as an assessment of possible violations of the UNITA sanctions since the two sides signed their April 4 ceasefire agreement.

The Security Council resolution, Oct 18, requested that the monitoring panel provide information on possible violations of the arms embargo, which has been in place since 1993, and the prohibitions, which date back to 1998, against the import of Angolan diamonds not controlled by the government.

[Background Info. Angola, page 853:a]

c. Framework agreement signed with East Timor: Angola and East Timor, Oct 15, signed a framework accord formalising the general basis for future bilateral cooperation.

Signing the accord were Angolan foreign minister Joao Miranda and visiting East Timor's minister of planning and finance, Mrs Madalena Boavida. The signing was witnessed by Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos and Timorean Premier Mario Alkatiri.

Mario Alkatiri arrived, Oct 15, in Luanda on a two-day official visit to Angola and was received at Luanda international airport by President Jose Eduardo dos Santos.

He is the first East Timor official visiting Angola officially since the country's independence on May 20, 2002.

The visiting Prime Minister will travel to the locality of Funda, near Luanda before touring the premises of the oil-related firm "Sonils".

(SOURCE: *Namibian*, Windhoek)

BENIN

a. African parliamentarians endorse New Partnership for Africa's Development: Nearly 200 African parliamentarians have endorsed the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), for the first time putting the continent's elected representatives strongly behind the new initiative.

At the African Parliamentary Forum for NEPAD in Cotonou, capital of Benin recently, the legislators mapped out ways to advance the initiative, it was reported, Oct 18.

Other participants included representatives of international organizations, donor countries and civil society organizations.

NEPAD, launched by African leaders in 2001, aims to promote democratic governance, respect for human rights, an economic and legal framework to encourage private sector investment, and access to international markets for African products.

The partnership also seeks to promote greater investment in key sectors, including education, health, information and communications technology, agriculture, environment and energy.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BOTSWANA

a. Call for action as inflation hits 10.1%: Botswana's business community reacted for urgent action from the central bank recently, to restrain spiralling prices as September's inflation edged up to 10.1%, the highest in more than two years.

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) blamed the grim figures on domestic workers' wage increase, housing, household consumables, food, VAT and the currency crisis affecting the region.

"This is bad because it is eroding the purchasing power of the people, especially the poor. It is bad for a country with high unemployment like Botswana," said Elias Dewah, CE of the Botswana Confederation of Commerce and Industry.

One out of two of Botswana's 1.6-million people live in abject poverty, and the unemployment rate is said to be 15%.

Dewah said that if the inflation rate was not contained, it would affect the bank rate and investment funds which were supposed to create the much-needed jobs.

"High inflation will affect the bank rate and as a result the investment fund," he said. The central bank should try to identify the main causes of the upsurge in inflation, Dewah said.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BURUNDI

a. Security Council urges rebels to lay down arms: The UN Security Council has urged Burundi's warring rebel factions to lay down their arms immediately and enter into ceasefire negotiations due to resume in Tanzania, it was reported, Oct 18.

The Council's president, Martin Belinga-Eboutou of Cameroon, Oct 17, called on the rebel movements to refrain from any action that might jeopardise a return to stability in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The hardline Burundi rebel factions, the Conseil National pour la Defense de la Democratie-Force pour le Defense de la democratie (CNDD-FDD) led by Peter Nkurunziza, and the Parti de Liberation du Peuple Hutu-Forces Nationales de Liberation (Palipehutu-FNL) wing of Agathon Rwasa have so far refused to take part in the ceasefire talks.

Two less influential factions of these groups, the Palipehutu-FNL of Alain Mugabarabona and the CNDD-FDD wing led by Jean Bosco Ndayikengurukiye signed the ceasefire accord with Burundi's transitional government on October 7, at the Great Lakes summit on Burundi.

At that summit, in the Tanzanian commercial capital, Dar-es-Salaam, the leaders gave the recalcitrant wings just 30 days to sign on or face the consequences.

b. Bujumbura, Kinshasa to sign peace accord: Burundi has agreed to withdraw its remaining two battalions of troops from the neighbouring Democratic Republic of the Congo, while Kinshasa has pledged that its territory will not serve as a rear base for Burundi Hutu rebel groups, a joint communique issued, Oct 13, from Bujumbura said.

Presidents Pierre Buyoya of Burundi and Joseph Kabila of the Congo are to sign a formal agreement at a venue and time to be announced later.

Congolese foreign minister Leonard She Okitundu, who headed his country's delegation on a two-day visit to Bujumbura, said both countries were committed to normalising relations after more than four years of war, in which Burundi has taken part.

The Burundi government also vowed to ban the sale and transit on its national territory of goods illegally exported from the Congo.

The deputy spokesman of the UN Mission in the DRC, Madnodje Mounoubai, said on October 9 that Burundi had withdrawn some 7,000 soldiers from the Congo, and had only two battalions left to pull out.

(SOURCE: *New Vision*, Kampala)

[Background Info. Burundi, page 829:a]

CAMEROON

a. Nigeria sends more soldiers and warship to Bakassi: Following the unfavourable World Court judgement, Oct 10, ceding the oil-rich Bakassi Peninsula to Cameroon, the Nigerian government, has moved swiftly to consolidate its hold on the disputed territory by deploying more troops and armaments.

Warships carrying heavy artillery weapons like armoured tanks, heavy artillery guns, trucks and armoured personnel carriers have been sent to the Nigerian side of the Peninsula.

The Nigerian naval fleet is being led by Captain John Okpogiri, who is the head of the Naval Task Force on Bakassi.

It was also learnt that the three Alpha Jets recently withdrawn from Ivory Coast have been stationed in Calabar for any emergency operation while members of the military task force on Bakassi, currently on leave, have been recalled.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

CHAD

a. World Bank to lend \$54m for power, water supply: The World bank has approved a loan of US \$54.8 million to the Chadian government to alleviate shortages in the energy and water supply sectors, it was reported, Oct 10.

The current crisis in energy and water supply was crippling economic activity and hindering the delivery of social services in Chad, the Bank said.

The loan would reduce costs, promote private sector participation in these sectors and support extension and rehabilitation of electricity and water supply facilities in the capital N'Djamena and the towns of Moundou, Sahr and Abeche. It would also finance the purchase of spare parts and water-purifying chemicals, the Bank said.

There are about 7,500 electricity customers in a country of 7 million, implying that only 1.5% of the population benefits from electricity. Of these 6,000 are located in the capital N'Djamena.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

CONGO (DR)

a. Rights leader abducted and tortured: A national human rights NGO in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has called for an immediate investigation to find those responsible for the abduction and torture of Sebastien Kayembe Nkokesha, chairman of the Congolese Human Rights Observatory.

The Association Africaine de Defense des Droits de l'Homme (ASADHO) made the call on October 16 after men in military uniform beat Kayembe outside the Military Order Court in Kinshasa.

Kayembe, a lawyer, was at the court to pick up files for clients he was defending in the ongoing trial of over 100 people accused of involvement in the January 16, 2001 assassination of the President, Laurent-Desire Kabila.

Kayembe was then put into a vehicle, and driven some 80 km away from Kinshasa towards the town of Maluku, where his eyes were sprayed with a substance that temporarily blinded him. The assailants then stuffed his mouth with a sock and continued beating him in the vehicle, until he was dumped in a field in the Kimbondo section of Mont Ngafula commune.

b. UNICEF sends clothes to 14,000 people hiding in forests: The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) sent clothing, Oct 15, to some 14,000 people hiding in forests around Businga, because they had no clothes.

The shipment also included 300 bundles of second-hand clothing, 500 cartons of soap, 1,512 sheets of waxed cloth, medicine and fuel.

During a mission conducted in July, UNICEF found that some 2,000 families deprived of clothing were hiding in the forest.

"The situation is very much the same in many other locations of this province, such as in Bosobolo and Budinga, where naked people sometimes venture out from the forest, but prefer to avoid

public areas because of their nudity," Doudou Lwemba Luvungu, UNICEF's deputy emergency administrator in the Congo, said.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

IVORY COAST

a. Ceasefire signed by rebels takes effect: A ceasefire signed by dissident soldiers who control much of northern Ivory Coast took effect, Oct 18, after a midnight address to the nation by President Laurent Gbagbo.

The rebel Patriotic Movement for Ivory Coast signed the ceasefire deal after West African mediators visited them in their stronghold of Bouake, the country's second-largest city. After the truce came into force, President Gbagbo appeared on national television and announced his endorsement.

Gbagbo said he was prepared to accept a West African peace plan.

"We are starting the peace process today," he said in an address broadcast on national television. He was prepared to launch a national reconciliation process and had asked France to provide troops as a temporary buffer between the two sides.

Leaders of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which brokered the truce, are to hold a summit soon to put in place a system for monitoring the ceasefire, said the organisation's executive secretary, Mohammed ibn Chambas.

Ultimatum to rebels: Earlier, President Laurent Gbagbo issued an ultimatum to rebel soldiers, saying the three-week-old uprising would be settled by the end of the week either through talks or military action.

In an address broadcast on satellite television, Gbagbo promised an end to the uprising "either by negotiation or by fighting", it was reported, Oct 16.

Gbagbo's ultimatum came as the US called on the Ivory Coast government to adopt a "flexible" response.

The United States advised the Ivory Coast government to be flexible about a truce and peace talks with northern rebels, a senior US official said.

"We were sending strong signals to the Ivorian government that flexibility is the name of the game right now," said Assistant Secretary of State Waloter Kansteiner, who visited Ivory Coast on an African tour recently.

Kansteiner said the US did however continue to recognize the government of President Laurent Gbagbo as the elected government of the country.

"We recognize that this is an important principle that we have to standby—that a rebel group in Africa or elsewhere simply cannot come to the fore by the barrel of the gun. So we encouraged him to be flexible," he added.

The United States is encouraged at the diplomatic efforts of Senegalese foreign minister Cheikh Tidiane Gadio and of the ECOWAS, the Economic Community of West African States.

"We encourage President Gbagbo to look at how some kind of ceasefire talks could be initiated. Foreign minister Gadio.....was trying to patch together a diplomatic effort that would pull the rebels in, get some kind of cessation of hostilities and bring both parties to the table," he said. "We want to be supportive of that," he added.

Kansteiner said the rebellion in Ivory Coast had clearly turned out to be more than just a "weekend mutiny".

"It is the beginnings of what looks like a serious civil war where you have an armed rebel group that...has the potential for command and control, and it is a serious threat to an elected government that we want to support," he added.

He said there appeared to be at least two or three rebel factions, with some degree of coordination between them, motivated by regional, ethnic and religious factors.

Defence minister sacked as rebels advance: Rebels in Ivory Coast went on attack in the west as President Laurent Gbagbo sacked his embattled defence minister and a Senegalese mediator made a last-ditch effort to avert all-out civil war.

Gbagbo took personal control of the army by leaving the defence ministry vacant and appointing Bertin Kadet, a junior security minister, as minister attached to the presidency responsible for defence and civil protection, Oct 12.

That meant Kadet would take his instructions directly from the President, who will become de facto defence minister, Mamadou Koulibaly, the president of the National Assembly, said.

"The President is positioning himself to wage the war as he wants to—that is, to switch from being on the defensive to going on the offensive, it's a new strategy," Koulibaly said.

The rebels, meanwhile, attacked the paramilitary gendarmerie camp outside the western town of Daloa, Oct 12, and the battle was continuing, the pastor of the Adventist church reported.

A hotel manager said the fighting was taking place north of Daloa, on the road to Vavoua, 56 km away, which the rebels captured on October 7.

Senegalese foreign minister Cheikh Tidiane Gadio held two hours of talks with rebel negotiators in Bouake. He later told a press conference that though no agreement had been reached, discussions would continue.

Meanwhile, food crisis is worsening in the rebel-held town of Bouake with only one day's food remaining in the Sainte Camille Centre for the mentally ill. Workers caring for more than 600 mentally ill people, trapped in the centre since the rebels took

control of the town three weeks ago said, Oct 12, they were in desperate need of food and medical care.

"We've only got good food left for today. Today is the last day," said Gregoire Ahongbonon, who works at the centre. "If the (aid) organizations don't come, I don't know what we are going to do.

"These people need medical and psychiatric assistance. But all the doctors have left or don't want to come here anymore".

Scores of men, women and children sat helplessly in the centre or wandered without direction through a nearby church courtyard, many with a fixed, expressionless gaze.

Thousands of civilians have fled Bouake since the crisis began with an attempted coup on September 19 tumbling Ivory Coast into its worst conflict since independence in 1960.

Aid workers estimate that up to 150,000 people might have left the town—about a quarter of the population in Ivory Coast's second city—after the commercial hub Abidjan.

For those left behind, food supplies are running low and prices of basic goods are sky high. Desperate residents say they fear hunger, rather than war, will kill them.

The rebels who occupy the town say they will allow humanitarian organizations to distribute food and medicine to civilians, but no agencies have started operating.

In the past, Sainte Camille has also become home to 300 to 400 prisoners who have been freed by the rebels from Bouake's criminal jail.

"There were 1,765 of us at the prison," 35-year-old Soumaro Abdoulaye said, explaining that he had served nearly half of a 20-year sentence for stealing a car when rebels stormed the prison and set him free.

"A majority volunteered to join the rebels and they were given guns". He said many prisoners who did not want to join the rebellion had chosen to stay in the centre, having nowhere else to go.

(SOURCE: *Statesman*, Calcutta)

[Background Info. Ivory Coast, page 857:a]

EGYPT

a. Ancient library opens after 1,600 years: Egypt has officially reopened one of the first and most celebrated centres of learning in human history—the library of Alexandria whose ancient roots stretch more than 2,000 years.

President Hosni Mubarak and some 3,000 dignitaries from around the world, including France's President Jacques Chirac, President Carlo Ciampi of Italy and Greece's President Costis Stephanopoulos, attended the opening ceremony, Oct 16.

Officially called the "Bibliotheca Alexandrina", the resurrected library reflects all the ambition of a bold 20-year project costing

\$200 million with backing from the UN cultural body UNESCO and numerous countries. The 11-storey edifice—on the spot where scholars believe the ancient library stood before it was destroyed—emerges from the ground as a giant disc tilting 20 degrees north towards the Mediterranean and forming a striking image when directly aligned with the sun.

Its southern-facing, windowless wall of granite carries engraved letters of most of the world's alphabets, a silent pledge to promote diversity, culture and unfettered learning.

Controversy has dogged the project since the beginning, from claims that valuable antiquities from the original Greek city of Alexandria were destroyed in the construction, to criticism that it amounted to an expensive gimmick which in itself does little to improve education in a developing country of 68 million.

But developments in information technology has offered the library a way out of the almost impossible task of building up a collection from scratch to rival the world's major libraries.

An initial target of eight million books has been shelved for a new focus on creating a state-of-the-art cyber-library, says the library's high-profile director, Ismail Serageldin.

"How many books you have is not that relevant. The issue of being at the forefront of building an electronic library becomes more relevant, and that's one of the reasons why we want to jump forward in the electronic realm," he said.

The library will also focus on certain areas of specialisation, backed up by holding major global seminars on issues in various fields of knowledge.

It has a lot to live up to. Previous luminaries included Archimedes, Euclid, Eratosthenes, St Mark and Manetho, who established today's system of classifying Egypt's Pharaonic dynasties. The first effort at collection and classification of universal knowledge, the great library set up after Alexander the Great established the city in 332 BC saw the first translation of the Old Testament from Hebrew to Greek.

"We're looking for niches that can complement our work: the Mediterranean area, Arab world, sub-Saharan Africa, and ethics of science and technology," said Serageldin, a former vice chairman of the World Bank and candidate to head UNESCO.

The library's hope to become a new beacon of knowledge and understanding comes at a critical time in West Asia.

(SOURCE: *Statesman*, Calcutta)

ERITREA

a. US accused of unwarranted intervention: Eritrea has accused the US State Department of "unwarranted intervention" after it questioned Asmara's human rights record, it was reported, Oct 21.

State Department spokesman Richard Boucher recently recalled that two Eritrean employees at the US embassy in Asmara had been held without charge for a year.

"The government of Eritrea should either release the two employees of the US embassy in Asmara or grant them due process and an opportunity to defend themselves in a fair and open trial," Boucher told a press briefing. He also reminded journalists of detention in 2001 of 11 prominent Eritrean politicians "who had called for greater democracy", as well as the arrest of journalists, a ban on the private media and new restrictions on freedom of religion.

"The United States calls upon the government of Eritrea to respect the fundamental human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including freedom of the press, freedom of association, and freedom of religion, and to return to the basic values of democracy and human rights, as it has repeatedly committed itself to do," Boucher said.

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

ETHIOPIA

a. Premier vows to fight terrorism: Prime Minister Meles Zenawi has stressed the importance of long-term sustainable development for Ethiopia and vowed to fight terrorism, in his first speech to the country's new parliament.

Speaking, Oct 8, he said the severe drought facing the country should not divert Ethiopia's aims of improving food security.

"It is saddening to find our country in a very difficult situation because of the drought at a time when we are striving hard to implement our development plan," the Prime Minister said.

He said that "in spite of meagre resources" the country had distributed 45,000 mt of grain to drought-afflicted families.

Meles also pledged to fight the rebel Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), which he again branded a terrorist organisation.

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

KENYA

a. Government to provide special security during polls, says Moi: President Daniel arap Moi, Oct 20, said special teams will be formed to oversee matters of security in major towns during the coming general election.

He said the teams will be despatched to Mombasa, Nairobi and other towns for the sake of ensuring that the elections are held in a peaceful manner. At the same time President Moi told all those aspiring for elective positions not to transport voters from one area to another, adding that this was bound to provoke others and jeopardise security.

"As we approach the general election, we should remember to conduct our affairs peacefully in unity, with love and also with general understanding that whichever party finally wins, it will still be a Kenyan party and life must go on," he added.

President Moi made the remarks when he presided over the 38th Kenyatta Day celebrations attended by several thousand people at Nyayo National Stadium. He urged Kenyans to stay and vote in peace during the elections, noting that democracy was where everybody is given a chance to vote for a person of his choice. He warned that the Government will take stern action against perpetrators of violence in a bid to ensure the elections are conducted in a peaceful atmosphere.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Kenya, page 845:a]

LIBERIA

a. Liberia accused of busting UN arms embargo: A UN panel of experts has accused the Liberian government of President Charles Taylor of busting UN sanctions on arms purchases, official travel and illicit diamond trade.

It accused the government of importing over 200 tons of military hardware and munitions into Liberia between June and August 2002, and undertaking official travels and illicit diamond sales around the globe with impunity, it was reported, Oct 18.

The UN Security Council in May 2001 renewed sanctions against Liberia including a ban on official travel by key Liberian government functionaries and business sympathizers, a ban on trading in illicit diamonds from Sierra Leone, and a ban on arms imports into Liberia, but the Liberian government has continuously shown its disdain for the sanctions regime by violating every aspect of the sanctions, according to excerpts of a new report by a UN panel of experts monitoring the Liberian sanctions.

The report said between June and August 2002, a total of six cargo planes loaded with at least 200 tons of machine guns, ammunition, hand grenades, missile launchers, mines and arms spare parts, new rotor engine and helicopter blades landed at the international airport on the outskirts of Monrovia, the Roberts International Airport, to deliver the consignment of arms, ammunition and military and mining hardware to Liberian defence ministry officials.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

MALAGASY

a. Parliament dissolved ahead of elections: Malagasy dissolved its parliament, Oct 16, ahead of parliamentary elections set for December 15, exactly a year after a disputed presidential election which plunged the country into a violent power struggle.

One candidate - an independent - has already registered and campaigning officially will begin on November 14, in the race for 160 seats in the national assembly.

The election is in line with demands by the international community and the African Union (AU) that fresh polls be held before the end of the year. This was part of a set of resolutions to defuse the stand-off between former President Didier Ratsiraka, who refused to accept his election defeat by Marc Ravalomanana who eventually declared himself President - a move endorsed by the country's highest court.

Although many countries have recognised Ravalomanana, the AU is yet to do so until he holds fresh polls. An added incentive to keep to the election timetable was the promise of donor funding for the impoverished island.

[Background Info. Malagasy, page 833:a]

b. Ex-mayor accused of embezzlement: The World Bank, Oct 9, said it would not conduct a "special" investigation into recent allegations that the former mayor of Tamatave had embezzled almost US \$5 million of aid money.

Roland Ratsiraka, the ex-mayor of the country's largest port city and nephew of ousted president Didier Ratsiraka was arrested on charges of inciting ethnic violence and embezzlement of foreign aid.

"The World Bank conducts regular technical and financial audits of all its projects throughout the country. It is always possible that development funds may be misused however our records have not shown any glaring irregularities," the Bank's technical advisor, Susan Holste, said.

Holste added that the Bank would only act on "concrete evidence that the ex-mayor had misappropriated aid money".

"Until then we have no reason to suspect any wrong doing. Moreover the amount supposedly embezzled is completely off the mark. If Ratsiraka had misused funds, it would have been much smaller than what he has been accused of," Holste said.

The arrest had surprised some political observers who said that Ratsiraka had been one of the first provincial mayors to have openly supported Marc Ravalomanana's presidency.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MALI

a. New unity government named: Malian President Amadou Toumani Toure has announced a new 28-member government, describing its main task as fighting poverty, media organisations reported, Oct 17.

The government was selected on the advice of Prime Minister Ahmed Mohamed Ag Hamani following negotiations with political parties, the French news agency, AFP, said.

Toure, a former military ruler, was elected President in May. "My aim is clear: to get a solid team on its feet, with consensus, to work for the good of the country," Toure said. "Those who want to play at party politics will have to jump ship."

Survivors of the outgoing 21-member government that resigned, Oct 12, include the prime minister and the ministries of defence, foreign affairs, the interior and internal security.

The new cabinet includes a junior minister for African integration and overseas Malians, a new post. It also includes leaders of political parties whom Toure had beaten in May's presidential polls.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MOZAMBIQUE

a. CPJ concern over journalist's murder probe: The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) has expressed alarm over serious irregularities in the investigation into the murder of journalist Carlos Cardoso.

The latest bizarre incident in the case involved the delivery of dozens of chickens—a gift allegedly from Mozambique's first lady—to the independent weekly *MediaFax*.

The delivery followed the publication's release of a September 27 column by Fernando Lima, citing allegations against the President's son Nymphine Chissano, which were made before the magistrate investigating the Cardoso murder. During the proceedings, a prison informant called Nymphine Chissano the "son of the rooster."

CPJ executive director Ann Cooper said that in the current environment, in which Mozambican journalists have expressed concern for their safety, the delivery of chickens must be interpreted as a "threatening gesture."

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Mozambique, page 846:a]

NAMIBIA

a. Another treason suspect dies in custody: Another man accused of being involved in the attempt to secede the Caprivi Region from the rest of Namibia in 1999 has died in police custody, it was reported, Oct 14.

This brings the death toll of detained suspects to eight, a rights organisation said at the weekend.

The National Society for Human Rights (NSHR) said in a press release, Oct 11, that Cassius Pেকেlezo (38) died while under heavy police guard at the Katima Mulilo State Hospital, Oct 8.

The cause of Pেকেlezo's death has not been revealed, but the NSHR said it received unverified reports that Pেকেlezo and two other detainees arrested in July on suspicion of being

members of the Caprivi Liberation Army (CLA) or the Caprivi Liberation Movement (CLM) had been tortured. Police, Oct 13, referred queries on the issue to Chief Inspector Hophni Hamufungu.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

NIGERIA

a. Obasanjo will survive impeachment threat, says minister: Minister of state for water resources, Precious Ngelale, Oct 19, described President Olusegun Obasanjo's detractors as "those who take Nigeria's monies without accountability."

"Because President did not allow them to continue that way, they are angry and they want to discredit him," he said, adding "we have a God that is the God of justice, he will not allow people with evil intentions to triumph over good."

Ngelale who was speaking in Port Harcourt at the inauguration of local government co-ordinators of Obasanjo/Atiku Campaign Organisation, Rivers State said "Obasanjo is a fearless leader with both military and civilian background who is never afraid to take any decision for the positive development of Nigeria."

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Nigeria, page 822:a]

RWANDA

a. Former minister not guilty of genocide, says defence: The defence of genocide suspect and former Rwandan minister of information, Elizer Niyitegeka, Oct 17, told the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) that its client was, contrary to prosecution allegations, an advocate for peace.

Sylvia Geraghty, Niyitegeka's counsel, was speaking after the closure of the prosecution case. The prosecution has presented 12 witnesses since the start of the trial on June 17.

Niyitegeka faces six charges of genocide and crimes against humanity for massacres committed in Bisesero (Kibuye province, west of Rwanda) and elsewhere in the country between April and July 1994. He allegedly ordered massacres of civilians and personally took part in attacks against Tutsis.

An estimated one million ethnic Tutsis and moderate Hutus were killed in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda according to an official census by the government of Rwanda.

"Niyitegeka spoke sincerely for peace for all Rwandans and was in favour of Arusha peace accords", said Geraghty. She argued that Niyitegeka couldn't have conspired with MRND (the then ruling party) and Interahamwe (a notorious militia linked to MRND) since the two had tried to assassinate him.

Former minister ordered rapes and killings, says witness: Former Rwanda minister for family affairs and gender issues and genocide suspect Pauline Nyiramasuhuko ordered the Interahamwe to rape and kill young Tutsi women and girls who had sought refuge at a government office in Butare, a witness told the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, Oct 14.

The trial resumed with the testimony of a prosecution witness dubbed "SU" to protect her identity. She testified mainly against Nyiramasuhuko.

"She said the Tutsi women refugees should be raped by Hutu men because they had previously refused to marry them. After she arrived, she called the Interahamwe who were in the office and asked them to select young Tutsi women and girls," the witness said.

The former minister is the first woman to be charged in an international court, and the first woman to be charged with rape and genocide.

"SU", the 15th prosecution witness, said the former minister showed the Interahamwe the refugees. Some were raped, others were beaten and those loaded in a truck were taken and killed. None of them came back, the witness said. "Hutus were killing Tutsis", she told the court.

'Tutsi man killed for speaking to Europeans': A Tutsi refugee was killed on orders of the bodyguard of a former Butare Prefect and genocide suspect, Sylvain Nsabimana, for speaking to Europeans who had visited refugees camping at the Butare prefecture office, a witness told the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, Oct 17.

The 15th prosecution witness named "SU", testifying for the fourth day in the so-called Butare trial, said that Nsabimana's guard chained the man she only knew as Donat and took him to the backyard of the office where he was killed during the day.

She said that Donat, who understood French, spoke to some Europeans who had visited the refugees and interviewed them about their welfare. She however did not state who the visitors were and where they were from.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Rwanda, page 847:b]

SENEGAL

a. Navy commander sacked over boat accident: Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade has sacked navy chief, Ousseynou Combo, following the country's worst naval accident three weeks ago that killed close to 1,000 people.

President Wade took the decision based on information he had received indicating mismanagement within the navy, Senegalese dailies reported, Oct 15.

According to the local press, disorganisation and a slow beginning of the rescue after the boat tragedy, were among possible errors that led to Combo's dismissal. Two ministers resigned soon after the vessel, *Le Joola* sank in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of The Gambia.

The country was still awaiting the results of the commission of inquiry mandated by Wade to shed light on the accident, news reports said.

Le Joola, which left Casamance in southern Senegal for the capital Dakar, sank on September 26 with more than 1,000 people onboard. Only 64 people survived the accident.

Overcrowding sank ferry: Overcrowding, poor safety checks and bad weather are being cited as the causes of the ferry disaster off the coast of Senegal.

The ship was built only 12 years ago by the German firm Neue Germersheimer Schiffswerft, which said it was approved for short sea journeys up to 50 nautical miles off the coast.

The managing director of the firm, Georg Hockels, told Lloyd's List that the German yard had not seen the ship since its delivery to Senegal, as the West African country had opted to undertake all maintenance and repair works on its own.

It is currently grounded on a sandbank off the Gambian coast, although Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade wants the ship towed back to Ziguinchor.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Senegal, page 860:a]

SIERRA LEONE

a. ADB approves \$21.16 million for education: The African Development Bank (ADB) has approved financing a sum of US \$21.16 million for a project to rehabilitate basic, non-formal education in Sierra Leone, it was reported, Oct 16.

The package includes a US \$19.84 million loan and grant of US \$1.32 million.

ADB said the "Education III Project" was aimed at implementing an emergency response in the provision of basic education, vocational skills training and functional literacy needs.

ADB said the project would strengthen national educational capacity through the rehabilitation, reconstruction or expansion of 460 primary and 100 junior secondary schools, as well as 40 community education and vocational training centers. It also includes the construction of 138 houses for teachers.

"The project will have an important impact on poverty reduction. Several impoverished parts of Sierra Leone will benefit from school construction or rehabilitation in their communities and 600 schools will benefit directly from the school maintenance programme countrywide," the ADB said.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SOMALIA

a. Somali peace talks open: Talks aimed at bringing peace to Somalia opened in Eldoret, Oct 15, with heads of state expressing concern that efforts to restore peace in the country had not yielded much since the overthrow of the country's last ruler in 1991.

Presidents Moi of Kenya, Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, Omar el-Bashir of Sudan and Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi were emphatic that peace efforts can only be achieved and sustained if Somali leaders were committed to the exercise.

They told delegates who represented the warring clans that the international community can only assist in the process if the locals showed the ability to have sustained peace, adding that the initiative itself must come from Somalia.

"We have provided you with the facilities and an environment conducive for reconciliation. It is up to you to seize this golden opportunity to seek and find the peace that has eluded you for so long, said President Moi during his opening address.

He said it was only frank dialogue based on goodwill and trust that could lead to a peaceful settlement. He added that Somali leaders must put national interest before their own in order to reach an agreement.

Women from southern and central regions discuss peace: Women representing five regions in southern and central Somalia held a meeting in the town of Marka, 100 km south of the capital, Mogadishu, Oct 8.

The three-day workshop, jointly sponsored by the UN Development Fund for Women and IIDA, a local women's NGO, opened, Oct 7.

The workshop is expected "to give the women a forum to discuss, debate and develop an approach for peace that can succeed in Eldoret", said a press statement issued by IIDA, Oct 7.

The objectives of the workshop include "understanding the root causes of the civil war and identify solutions for approaching peace", it said.

The workshop is also expected to promote the awareness of the participants "on the Islamic view of women's role in decision-making and political participation", the statement added.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Somalia, page 848:a]

SOUTH AFRICA

a. Inter-faith summit: A historic one-week conference of religious leaders from different communities in Africa opened in South Africa, October 14, with a colourful procession by delegations.

Representatives of African Traditional Religion, Baha'i faith, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism wearing their robes and symbols of authority, observed a silent procession at the Kopanong Hotel and Conference Centre, Benoni, near Johannesburg, launching a first Inter-Faith Peace Summit in Africa.

The October 14-19 conference was organized by the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and hosted by the National Religious Leaders' Forum of South Africa NRLFSA. Religious delegations are drawn from 21 African countries, and observers as well as resource persons from Finland, the United States and Sweden.

After the procession, prayers and scriptures during plenary session were offered by representatives of the respective faith traditions.

They were Sheikh Abu Bakaar Conteh (Islam, Sierra Leone), Ntate Kgalushi Koka (African Traditional Religion, South Africa), Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris (Judaism, South Africa), Ms Lucretia Warren (Baha'i faith, Botswana), Roman Catholic Cardinal Wilfrid Napier (Christianity, South Africa), Methodist Prelate Sunday Mbang (Christianity, Nigeria) and Peter Just (Buddhism, South Africa).

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

SUDAN

a. Rebels sign first peace truce in 19 years: Sudan's government and the rebels signed a ceasefire, Oct 15, for the duration of their latest round of peace talks, the first such truce in 19 years of civil war.

The deal, which covers the whole of Sudan, has boosted hopes of a breakthrough to end the conflict that has divided Africa's biggest country and killed an estimated two million people.

"Both parties have signed the cessation of hostilities, which will take effect, Oct 17, (0900 GMT)", said Lazaro Sumbeiywo, Kenya's envoy at the talks. "It will last for as long as the talks are on, which could be until the end of the year".

The talks aim to reach a permanent ceasefire in Africa's longest civil war, which pits rebels fighting for more autonomy for south Sudan against the Islamic government in the North.

Negotiations between the government and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) collapsed in September after the rebels seized the strategic garrison town of Torit. Fighting in southern Sudan has escalated since then.

When Khartoum's forces retook Torit recently, the rebels gave in to a government demand that they sign a ceasefire before resuming peace negotiations.

"This is the first time where we have signed a cessation of hostilities," SPLA spokesman Samson Kwaje told reporters in Machakos.

"Both parties have signed so as to allow the talks to continue," he added. A Sudanese government negotiator confirmed that the government had also signed the deal.

Khartoum reacts angrily to US Bill: The Khartoum government has reacted angrily to a US Bill passed by the House of Representatives on October 7.

The Bill condemns the country's human rights record and calls on US President George Bush to deny Sudan access to oil revenues if, after six months, it is deemed not to be negotiating in good faith at resumed peace talks.

A statement issued by the Sudanese embassy in Washington described the "Sudan peace act" as a "hostile, biased and religiously motivated Bill" which would prolong the war and the suffering in Sudan.

The US had "irrationally" chosen to blame the Sudanese government for the casualties of the 19-year war as well as a possible failure of the peace talks, due to resume in the Kenyan town of Machakos soon, the statement said.

A section of the Sudan Peace Act calls upon the US Secretary of State to "collect information about incidents which may constitute crimes against humanity, genocide, war crimes and other violations of international humanitarian law by all parties to the conflict in Sudan, including slavery, rape and aerial bombardment of civilian targets".

(SOURCE: *Indian Express*, New Delhi and *East African*, Nairobi)
[Background Info. Sudan, page 861:a]

SWAZILAND

a. Palace abducted young girls: Swazi King Mswati III who revived a traditional ban on sex with underage girls in order to combat HIV/AIDS, has violated the ban by taking young girls as wives, it was reported, Oct 21.

King Mswati III's courtiers were accused in court of abducting two 17-year-old girls and an 18-year-old girl for "royal duties".

The abductions, it was claimed, could amount to a violation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The controversy is seen by a UN-linked group as a "clash between customs and modernity", while across the kingdom, support is growing for court action by a mother, Lindiwe Dlamini, to free her 18-year-old daughter, Zena Mahlangu.

Together with two other girls, Nolihiwa Ntentesa and Sandra Dlamini, Mahlangu was allegedly whisked off to an unknown destination, where she was made to perform "royal duties" as a prelude to becoming one of the emakhosikati, or king's wives.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

TANZANIA

a. Kenyan sentenced to hang for murder: A Kenyan who killed a Tanzanian by cutting him into pieces has been sentenced to hang by the Tanzanian High Court.

Gibore Buruna was found guilty of murdering Chacha Bisare by the High court sitting at the Lake region. According to a Tanzania Kiswahili daily, *Majira*, Buruna committed the offence on February 17, 2000, at Getenga village.

Buruna was found guilty by Judge John Mtolela. Buruna who hails from Kuria district is reported to have murdered Bisare, a resident of Getenga by cutting him into pieces using a panga.

Together with Buruna, the court also sentenced to death two other people for murdering their wives.

Lucas Kinito (80), a resident of Rebu village and Nyakua Orondo (32), a resident of Shirati were found guilty of murdering their wives, Wegesa Kinito and Pamela Nyakua respectively.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

UGANDA

a. Call to end 'siege' on Monitor: Kenyan journalists and a political party, Oct 16, condemned the blockade of Uganda's only independent daily, *The Monitor*.

The Kenya Union of Journalists and the Media Institute appealed to the Ugandan government to end the siege and return confiscated equipment. They also called for the release of reporter Frank Nyakairu, being held by police over a controversial report alleging the crash of an army helicopter in combat.

The Social Party for Advancement and Reforms in Kenya (Spark) urged the Ugandan government to resolve the dispute through civil methods. The media organisations urged the East African Assembly to intervene "in this gross violation of the right to property, life and free speech."

KUJ secretary-general Ezekiel Mutua and Media Institute director David Makali said at a press conference in Nairobi: "We call on all media in the region to stand up in solidarity with our Ugandan counterparts. This is not a matter for *The Monitor* or the Nation Media Group alone but one that concerns the Press and Kenyan investors in the media."

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

ZAMBIA

a. High court throws out petition against Mwanawasa: The Lusaka High court, Oct 18, threw out Heritage Party president Brigadier General Godfrey Miyanda's petition against President Mwanawasa.

Miyanda petitioned against President Mwanawasa and the MMD after the MMD seized his office in Kabwata. In his ruling,

udge Kajimanga advised Brig. Gen. Miyanda to delete President Mwanawasa's name from the petition documents.

He further advised Brig. Gen. Miyanda to make amendments to his petition so that only MMD officials could be sued. Judge Kajimanga explained that President Mwanawasa enjoyed immunity and could not be dragged to court.

Brig. Gen. Miyanda said judge Kajimanga ruled in favour of President Mwanawasa in a matter in which he sued him in his personal capacity as MMD party president because his ruling party grabbed an office from him. "I can't comment further on that as I am considering the implications of the ruling before I take the next step," Brig. Gen. Miyanda said.

He, however, observed that the breach occurred before Mwanawasa became President. "And communication with him was strictly with the president of a political party and not as President of Zambia," he said.

He said President Mwanawasa's conduct was an abuse of office. Brig. Gen. Miyanda wondered why President Mwanawasa claimed immunity when his party had arbitrarily grabbed property which did not belong to the MMD.

b. Task Force prosecutor Edwin Kalaluka is dead: One of the prosecutors in the task force investigating plunder of national resources, Edwin Kalaluka, is dead.

Kalaluka, 44, was found dead in his Chelston house, Oct 15, by his children.

Police spokesperson Brenda Muntemba who confirmed Kalaluka's death said causes of his death were not known. She said the children discovered their father dead when he was not responding to their calls when a fellow police officer went to pick him for work.

"I can confirm that the late Kalaluka died in his sleep while his wife was at Chelston Clinic attending to a sick relative," she said. Muntemba said it was likely that a postmortem could be considered to ascertain causes of his death. Kalaluka was at the time of his death officer-in-charge of Chelston police station.

c. US donates \$1 m for refugees in Lusaka: The United States will disburse one million US dollars to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to support "Zambia initiative" aimed to assist Angolan displaced persons, it was reported, Oct 8.

A communique from embassy of the US to Angola refers that the American aid will help to finance school construction, teachers' training and setting up of a centre of combat to sexually transmitted diseases.

"The project is seen as a model to follow in other situations that involve refugees and be necessary to conjugate humanitarian aid and development", reads the note.

The document states that several donors, such as Japan, Denmark, Sweden and the European Union Humanitarian Office also pledged to assist the Zambia initiative.

Nearly 187 million US dollars have already been granted by the United States in 2002 to support war victims in Africa.

(SOURCE: *Post*, Lusaka)

ZIMBABWE

a. ICFTU condemns arrest of 627 teachers: The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, representing 157 million workers in 148 countries and territories, including Zimbabwe, protested at the dismissal by the Public Service Commission of 627 teachers who have been involved in strike action, it was reported, Oct 15.

In its letter to Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe, the Brussels-based labour group also firmly condemned the arrest of Raymond Majongwe, the secretary general of the Progressive Teachers' Union of Zimbabwe (PTUZ), for allegedly threatening teachers, and the arrests of two fellow leaders of the PTUZ, Innocent Moyo and Enock Paradzayi, on public order charges. The ICFTU is particularly concerned at reports that Majongwe sustained injuries during his 48-hour in custody, and appeared before a court with a torn shirt and injuries to one eye and an arm.

"The arrest of workers for exercising their legitimate right to strike is clearly in violation of internationally recognised workers' rights. The action of the Public Service Commission is all the more uncalled for given that the permanent secretary of education, sports and culture, Dr Thompson Tsodzo, had assured the teachers that their case was being considered", the letter said.

The ICFTU, calling on the government to reinstate all dismissed workers, urged Mugabe to enter into serious negotiations with the teachers' union to ensure a swift and peaceful end to the dispute. It also demanded the immediate release of Moyo and Enock Paradzayi, and the dropping of all charges against them and against Raymond Mojongwe.

b. High Court senior prosecutor arrested: A High Court senior prosecutor was arrested by police, Oct 8, after he allegedly battered his wife following a domestic dispute.

Gerald Butaumocho of Mufakose assaulted his wife, following a misunderstanding over money the couple owed their neighbour. Police spokesperson Inspector Cecilia Churu confirmed the incident. Churu said Butaumocho pounced on his defenceless wife with clenched fists and hit her head against a wall before she collapsed.

The woman was saved from further assault after neighbours heard screams and rushed to rescue her before they reported the matter to police. When police from Marimba arrived at the

couple's house, they found the woman bleeding profusely. She was rushed to a private clinic at High Glen in Harare where she is recovering from the injuries.

Police could not disclose her condition but said Butaumocho has to be examined by a doctor to check his mental status. The 30-year-old prosecutor was still in police custody. Cases of domestic violence have been on the increase with many women losing their lives.

c. 188 die of cholera in Manicaland: A total of 188 people died of cholera in Manicaland out of 1,963 who were affected by the disease during the first quarter of 2002, a ministry of health and child welfare official said, Oct 15.

Briefing visitors to the Manicaland Agricultural Show recently, an official at the ministry's stand Evos Makoni said the figures were only for patients who reported at health institutions for treatment.

"We adopted the theme of 'Cholera: get the facts' this time because we had a lot of cholera cases this year. A single case is an epidemic to us because the disease is highly infectious.

"Cholera or diarrhoea cases are very preventable and the method is simple to follow. It is also very simple to control.

"We are assuming that the reason why we had a terrible death rate this year was because sugar, which is needed for the salt and sugar solution needed for preventing dehydration, was scarce in the country."

Makoni said cholera was the most dangerous diarrhoea disease which caused sudden passing of watery stools and vomiting. "It can also spread when people get into contact with the stool and vomit of the sick person and later touch food, water and kitchen utensils without washing their hands," he said.

d. Sir Garfield Todd dead: The former Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia, Sir Garfield Todd, died, Oct 13, in Bulawayo.

Sir Garfield (94), died after he suffered a stroke at Materdei Hospital. Born in New Zealand, Sir Garfield was Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia between 1953 and 1958, but was then ousted because he was seen by many whites in the then British colony as being too liberal.

He and his wife Lady Grace, who died in 2001, arrived in Zimbabwe in 1934 as missionary teachers to the Dadaya Mission in the south of the country.

From 1944 to 1954, Sir Garfield was a member of the Missionary Conference of Southern Rhodesia and a member of

the committee that advised the then Rhodesian government on African education.

With the formation of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in 1953, Sir Garfield, who was minister of trade and industrial development, was elected leader of the United Party and thus Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia, with Godfrey Huggins as the Federal Prime Minister.

The United Party was then dissolved and the United Rhodesia Party formed. As Prime Minister, Sir Garfield also took the justice and international portfolio but gave up a year later and established the African education portfolio and became its first minister.

e. Over 500 dogs lost in 'mercy killings': The Zimbabwe National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ZNSPCA) recently put to death over 500 dogs belonging to Tredar Security Company, owned by white commercial farmers evicted from the Mashonaland West Province.

Meryl Harrison, the chief inspector and national coordinator of the ZNSPCA, confirmed the killings to *The Standard*, Oct 14, but said they were mercy killings.

"The security company had abandoned about 550 dogs and we moved in to take care of the situation. We don't have the capacity to keep them so we are humanely euthanising them. When humanly euthanising them, we use an injection," said the animal rights activist.

She added: "We couldn't get any people interested in taking over the dogs." However, some residents criticised the slaying of the security dogs saying the ZNSPCA had, by its actions, shown its unwillingness to entrust the dogs to the care of black people

"We have for long been trying to acquire this kind of dogs but to no avail, yet you see an organisation getting rid of over 500 dogs without having advertised them first," said an angry resident. Another man who was interested in the dogs said what the organisation had done was the worst form of cruelty to animals

"I am sure if the dogs had been advertised many people would have come forward to buy them, considering that thieves are wreaking havoc everyday. The ZNSPCA showed that it did not trust anyone other than the evicted white farmers to take care of the animals," he said.

(SOURCE: *Independent*, Harare)

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ANGOLA

a. Popes's envoy offers to collaborate in peace process: The Holy See's envoy, Cardinal Crescenzo Sepe, Oct 28, reaffirmed Catholic church's willingness to collaborate with the civil society in the Angolan peace process.

The Catholic prelate said Pope John Paul II has always prayed for peace in Angola. Cardinal Crescenzo Sepe said church's collaboration is important because it lives in the people, loves the people and is incarnate in the people.

He also said that the practical matters related to the implementation of the ceasefire agreement be done with serenity, so that peace is consolidated. Cardinal Sepe is in Angola to salute the 10th anniversary of the pastoral visit paid by Pope John Paul II in 1992. He addressed a religious mass, Oct 27, in Luanda, in which he highlighted the need to love one another.

Catholic University attacked: The Catholic University of Angola (UCAN) was attacked, Oct 24, by a group of unknown persons, who stole an unspecified amount of money from that institution's coffers.

Illegal religious sects banned: Seventeen religious sects have been shut down in northern Cabinda province, as part of a local government operation that started in October.

The sects closed down are on a list of 57 unregistered religious groupings that have been identified for ban. According to a press release from Cabinda provincial council's third extraordinary session held, Oct 22, six leaders of sects are under arrest. The provincial council also noted that apart from being illegal, many of these sects indulged in unauthorised modern and traditional medicines, putting people's life at risk.

(SOURCE: *Namibian*, Windhoek)

BURUNDI

a. Former President arrested: Former Burundi President Col. Jean-Baptiste Bagaza was placed under house arrest at his residence in Bujumbura, Nov 1.

He was later dragged before the prosecutor general over charges of threatening the security of his country. Four members of his opposition political party were also arrested.

"Bagaza is under house arrest and his South African body guards, provided to him by the Arusha Accord, have been withdrawn," a family source told *The New Vision* by telephone from Bujumbura, Nov 3. Bagaza, who is currently head of his Parena party and a member of the transitional government senate, protested the arrest, saying he has immunity. He is being

held at his residence in Rohero, a posh suburb of Bujumbura and nobody is allowed to see him, the source said.

b. Rebels step up war despite progress in ceasefire talks: Burundian rebels have launched several fresh attacks against government forces despite progress at ceasefire talks between the two sides, being held in the Tanzanian city of Dar-es-Salaam.

Units of Burundi's main rebel group, the Conseil National pour la Defense de la Democratie-Force pour la Defense de la Democratie (CNDD-FDD), lobbed 13 mortar bombs into Burundi's second-largest city, Gitega, Nov 3.

"One shell fell near the school for the blind at Mushasha, another fell near the girls' secondary school, but it seemed many were directed at the Bragita brewery," a Gitega resident said, Nov 3, "Thank God, no one was killed or wounded."

Burundi's Net Press reported that the town's electricity supply was interrupted during the attack after a high-voltage line was hit. Elsewhere, Nov 3, government troops killed 51 rebels heading for Zina, in the northwestern province of Bubanza, the army spokesman, Col Augustine Mzabampema, said. He made no mention of government losses or of the identity of the rebels.

(SOURCE: *New Vision*, Kampala)

[Background Info. Burundi, page 866:a]

CAMEROON

a. Abuja ready to discuss dispute over Bakassi: Nigeria's President Olusegun Obasanjo said, Oct 29, he was ready to meet Cameroon's President Paul Biya to resolve the dispute over ownership of the Bakassi peninsula.

The International Court of Justice at The Hague, at which the Cameroonian government lodged a complaint eight years ago, awarded ownership of the peninsula to Cameroon on October 10.

However, Nigeria rejected the ruling, accusing the ICJ of favouring colonial treaties rather than the original ownership title of the mainly Nigerian population of the oil-rich peninsula.

"I am ready to meet with President Paul Biya of Cameroon anytime, anywhere to work out a political solution," Obasanjo told a delegation of Bakassi leaders who visited him in the capital, Abuja, to express displeasure with the ICJ verdict. Obasanjo said he had already spoken with UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan about Nigeria's readiness to pursue a peaceful, negotiated solution to the crisis.

However, he described the ICJ ruling as "politically hard to swallow" and pledged not to compromise his country's interests or the welfare of its people.

"The judges of the International Court of Justice may just look at treaties and give judgment, but we cannot do the same," Obasanjo said. "For us Bakassi is real. It is men, women and children. It is people living in their homes, on their land...", Obasanjo said.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Cameroon, page 866:a]

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

a. Conflictiing reports on coup; toll mounts: Government forces loyal to Central African Republic (CAR) President Ange-Felix Patasse and rebel soldiers held their positions, Oct 29, in the nation's capital, Bangui.

While sporadic heavy fighting was reported, two Libyan fighter jets flew over city, believed to be mapping rebel positions for a bombing raid. CAR troops are supported by about 200 Libyan soldiers, who were first sent to Bangui in the wake of a failed coup bid launched in May 2001 by former President Andre Kolingba. Thousands of people were fleeing to the town of Mbaiki, about 175 km southwest of Bangui. The number of dead and injured remained impossible to ascertain, Oct 29, although witnesses said that many civilians had been caught in the crossfire between government and rebel forces.

Three young militiamen from the neighbouring Democratic Republic of the Congo, Oct 29, surrendered their weapons to armed supporters of Gen Francois Bozize, the former chief of staff of the CAR army, who claimed responsibility for the uprising. The militiamen said they were returning immediately to the DRC because they "didn't want to die". They did not say if they were affiliated with the Congolese rebel leader Jean-Pierre Bemba's Mouvement de Liberation du Congo (MLC).

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Central African Republic, page 854:a]

CONGO (DR)

a. Kabila, Kagame review peace accord: President Joseph Kabila of the Democratic Republic of Congo and Paul Kagame of Rwanda attended a summit in the South African administrative capital, Pretoria, Nov 1, to review the Lusaka peace accord and the memorandum of understanding signed in Pretoria on July 30.

Both heads of state were to present progress reports on the steps they had taken in accordance with the Pretoria agreement. The deal committed Kabila to the disarmament and repatriation of Rwandan rebel groups in exchange for a Rwandan withdrawal from DRC territory.

In a statement released, Nov 1, Rwanda reiterated that it had completed the withdrawal of its troops and had "repeatedly expressed concern about the Kinshasa government's backing of recent fighting in the east of the DRC and its failure to fulfil its commitments under the two agreements".

Meanwhile, the DRC government and other groups have accused Rwanda of leaving behind troops in the DRC to support the Rwanda-backed rebel Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie (RCD- Goma).

Stop DRC clashes, UN urges Uganda: The UN Security Council has urged Uganda to help stop ethnic fighting in Ituri, eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, where human rights activists have warned of looming 'ethnic cleansing'.

After closed-door consultations, Security Council president Martin Belinga-Eboutou of Cameroon, made a statement, Oct 30, saying: "The members called on Uganda and the DRC to work with the UN mission in the area (MONUC) to ensure the success of the Ituri Pacification Commission. It also asked other states in the region, particularly Rwanda, to contribute."

"Uganda should watch out for the security of the civilian population in and around Bunia," the president was quoted by the UN news service as saying.

Ituri has been the scene of ethnic clashes since June, according to the latest report of Secretary-General Kofi Annan on the situation in the DRC.

The US-based Human Rights Watch has urged the UN to increase its peace-keeping forces in the DRC. UN chief Kofi Annan has asked that the MONUC be expanded to 8,700 troops and the matter was being considered.

[Background Info. Congo (DR), page 843:a]

b. UN names companies involved in billion dollar scams: The United Nations Security Council has recommended financial restrictions be imposed against 29 companies active in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The report also names dozens of other public and private companies for violating commercial guidelines in relation to Congo dealings, it was reported, Oct 22.

The sanctions were proposed by the UN to curb "illegal exploitation of raw materials" in the war ravaged country by "criminal organizations and persons".

The DRC has become a cookie jar for the brave with seven regional countries involved in the civil war which has mostly to do with the spoils accruing to mining concession holders, both legal and illegal.

The UN report says the stripping of the DRC is being orchestrated by three circles of influence involving Zimbabwe, Uganda and private individuals trying to get their hands on diamonds, cobalt, copper, germanium. The UN panel believes more than \$ 5 billion of assets have been transferred from the State mining sector to private companies in the past three years without any public treasury benefit.

Even as foreign troops prepare to withdraw, the Zimbabwean Defence Force has created holding companies to front its activities and is also installing a private security force to protect its booty.

Kabila sacks leaders of state mining company: President Joseph Kabila has dismissed the leaders of the state diamond mining company, two weeks after its head, Jean-Charles Okoto, was named in a UN expert panel report on the illegal exploitation of the natural resources of DRC, it was reported, Nov 4.

The government, however, denied that the dismissal of Okota and colleagues at the Minière de Bakwanga (Miba) was linked to UN report.

"This measure by the President has nothing to do with the report of the UN panel," the DRC government spokesman, Kikaya Bin Karubi, said, Nov 2. "These managers were appointed by former President Laurent Desire Kabila in 1997, but now that the war is over, we want to appoint a new board of directors and change the management structure," Kikaya said, Nov 2.

The report, released on October 21, said that despite the withdrawal of foreign forces from the DRC, "elite criminal networks" had become so deeply entrenched that continued illegal exploitation of the country's natural resources continued. It named Okoto as one of the chief figures in the "elite network" of the DRC government and allied Zimbabwe forces.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Congo (DR), page 794:b]

DJIBOUTI

a. More US troops en route to Horn: The number of United States troops in Djibouti may soon number more than 2,000 with the announcement, Oct 29, by Gen Tommy Franks, commander of the US Central Command, that another 700-800 are to be sent to the nation in the Horn of Africa.

In his remarks at a Pentagon press briefing largely devoted to Iraq, Gen Franks suggested that the incoming troops will be Marines. "It seems to make sense to us to put this capability - Marine capability - in the vicinity of Djibouti to work with countries in the Horn of Africa." Most of the troops are based in the coastal town of Obock near the Gulf Of Tadjora.

A U.S. amphibious assault ship carrying attack helicopters has also been sent into the area. And in addition to Marines, US Special Forces units, and Navy Seals are also present in Djibouti.

Gen Franks, a four-star army general, is widely considered to be first in line to run a US "pre-emptive" military campaign against Iraq, and will soon oversee establishment of a new "deployable" command post at al-Udeid air base in Qatar. "You don't train in Obok for three months in 110 degree temperature if it isn't going to be for Iraq," said one analyst close to the Djibouti government.

The government of Djibouti denies that its territory will be used in this way. Speaking for the government, the minister of communications and culture, Rifki Abdouldaker Bamakhrama, said, newspaper reports that US forces stationed in Djibouti were preparing for an attack on Iraq were "unfounded". "Djibouti was opposed to any action of the kind," he said.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Djibouti, page 856:a]

ETHIOPIA

a. Largest-ever polio vaccination campaign: Ethiopia, Oct 24, launched its biggest-ever polio vaccination campaign in the country.

More than 14 million children are to be targeted in the final immunisation in Ethiopia in which more than 74,000 volunteers will take part. The Ethiopian army has also been mobilised to help with the campaign in areas which are deemed insecure.

"It is the largest mass immunisation thus far in this country," World Health Organisation representative Angela Benson said at the launch. It also emerged that no case of polio had occurred in Ethiopia for the last 20 months since January 2001 - a major breakthrough for the country.

To be certified polio-free, a country must have no case of the virus for three years. A target of 2005 has been set for the global eradication of the disease.

"Significant progress has been achieved," said Ibrahim Jabr, the head of the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Ethiopia.

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

GAMBIA

a. Rights defenders protest 'impunity deal' for US soldiers: The Coalition of Human Rights Defenders in The Gambia has sent a strongly worded statement over recent bilateral agreements between the government and the United States to exempt American citizens from prosecution by the International Criminal Court.

In a terse statement to *The Independent* newspaper, the human rights body said it was appalled by the agreement, which ran counter to the established international protocol on justice and fairness.

"While it is no doubt clear that the U.S. stands to gain from this agreement, the Coalition wonders what the people of The Gambia will gain (apart from possible economic aid to the government) from such a blatant disregard for norms of international law. We believe that this agreement threatens to undermine national and in particular, international efforts to hold accountable those responsible for international crimes of the greatest concern to the international community" the statement said.

The Coalition dismissed such agreements as unlawful under international law and threatened to undermine international efforts to prevent criminals from planning and committing crimes against humanity. The Coalition challenged the United States by insisting that no one should be granted immunity from prosecution for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes to be heard by the International Criminal Court.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

GHANA

a. Togolese cocoa smuggler arrested: Personnel of the Criminal Intelligence Unit of the Hohoe divisional police, Oct 30, arrested a 30-year-old Togolese for allegedly smuggling 24 bags of cocoa out of Kute in the Jasikan district.

Daniel Otchere, Hohoe divisional commander, told the Ghana News Agency (GNA) that the police arrested the suspect, also known as 'Assirock' following a tip off on October 22.

The police said a quantity of cocoa beans and 24 empty cocoa sacks made in Togo were found in the suspect's room.

He said an "Olonka" tin, used by smugglers in buying cocoa in the area, was also found in the suspect's room.

Police arrest 16 drug suspects: The Eastern Regional Police have arrested 16 people dealing in drugs in the Krobo area.

A two-acre farm of Indian hemp at Kio-Agogo near Asesewa has been destroyed by the police, it was reported, Oct 22.

The deputy regional police commander, Alhaji Hamidu Mahama, said they conducted operations in the area where they learnt that some people were cultivating Indian hemp.

A search in the room of the suspected farmer, Dawu Tetteh Oka, aged 32, revealed two fertilizer sacks full of dried leaves suspected to be Indian hemp and three unlicensed guns.

The suspects are John Tetteh Apeku, 74, Sam Tetteh, 20, Eric Kwabena Acheampong, 27, and Narh Emmanuel, 29. Others are Michael Sulley, 17, Gamor Isaac, 16, Lawal Mohammed, 21, and Angmor Foi, 17.

The rest are Patrick Okum, 30, Nana Anku, 30, Jonathan Kormetey, 19 and Frederick Tetteh, 30.

Alhaji Hamidu stated that the suspects will be put before court for prosecution.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. ghana, page 820:b]

GUINEA BISSAU

a. Chissano visits Bissau land mine centre: Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano has said that by complying with the provisions of the Ottawa treaty outlawing anti-personnel land mines, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau and Angola can make a great difference in freeing the world of these treacherous weapons, it was reported, Oct 24.

He was speaking at the end of a visit to the National Anti-Mine Coordination Centre in Bissau. This body was set up in 2001, and Mozambican staff are working there, training Guineans in demining techniques.

Chissano said he was impressed by the way knowledge is being transmitted, and is being rapidly assimilated by the Guinean volunteers who are putting their own lives at risk in order to save the lives of thousands of their fellow citizens.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

IVORY COAST

a. 755 Nigerians evacuated from Ivory Coast: Another batch of 775 Nigerians from war zones of Ivory Coast have left Abidjan for Lagos, an official of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) said, Oct 30.

Kenneth Nsor, a special assistant of NEMA director, said the agency would evacuate 300 Nigerians within the next few days and that their registration had begun.

He said the evacuees were also from Abidjan and other affected towns in the country, adding that there had been

registration and feeding of those who had no relatives in Abidjan at the Nigerian embassy for about a week.

Nsor said that majority of the evacuees were women and children because the agency had begun what he called third-class evacuation which was the evacuation of dependants including wives and children, while the men would remain behind for the meantime to sort out their lives with the hope that the situation might improve.

More than 12 buses were used for the evacuation of the Nigerians, while a sea of people were seen making frantic efforts to ensure that they joined the crowd in areas where officials were calling people's names for onward embarkment for the two-day journey from Abidjan to Lagos via Ghana, Togo and Benin.

Meanwhile, the Nigerian embassy in Ivory Coast has applied for permission for it to embark on the evacuation of the families of its staff, an embassy official said. The source said as soon as the permission was granted the families of the embassy staff would be evacuated and that they might be leaving for Ghana.

Ecowas agrees to send 2000 peacekeepers: The Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas) agreed, Oct 27, to send a 2,000-strong military force, headed by Senegal, to monitor the ceasefire in Ivory Coast.

The decision followed meetings, Oct 26 and Oct 27, of regional military chiefs in the commercial capital, Abidjan, to finalise plans for the Ecomog force, after considering a report from an earlier West African and Western military reconnaissance mission.

Later, foreign ministers and heads of delegations, from the Ecowas Mediation and Security Council, endorsed the commitment taken earlier by the chiefs of defence staff to dispatch peacekeepers to Ivory Coast.

The Ecowas executive secretary, Mohamed Ibn Chambas, told reporters after the meeting, that the Senegalese would command the force.

"The largest number of troops will come from Senegal. We have a timeframe of about 10 to 15 days for the deployment."

Eight other countries, Benin, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Togo, are also to contribute manpower to the regional force, though the number of troops per country was not specified.

Chambas said a civilian head of the Ecowas military monitoring mission would come from Nigeria, the dominant regional power, which, after short lived leadership from Ghana, has, since 1990 provided successive force commanders for Ecomog operations during the civil wars in neighbouring Liberia and Sierra Leone.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Ivory Coast, page 867:a]

KENYA

a. Moi dissolves parliament: Kenya's parliament was dissolved, Oct 25, paving the way for a general election that will see the end of President Daniel arap Moi's 24-year-long rule.

Moi, the third-longest-serving head of state in Africa, officially dissolved parliament, so that presidential and parliamentary elections could be held within 90 days. The move comes one day after Moi's preferred successor, Uhuru Kenyatta, launched his campaign for the presidency.

Kenyatta was nominated recently as candidate of the ruling Kenyan African National Union (KANU), which has been in power since Kenyan independence in 1963 and is blamed by many for widespread poverty and corruption.

Moi has been president since 1978, but after serving two consecutive terms since the return of multi-party democracy 10 years ago, is required by the constitution to step down. Kenyatta's main rival for the presidency will be Mwai Kibaki, 71, who was named recently candidate for the opposition National Rainbow Coalition.

Electoral Commission locks out 77,000 voters: A total of 77,862 people who had registered more than once have been barred from taking part in the December 27 general election, it was reported, Nov 2.

The Electoral Commission of Kenya (ECK) chairman, Samuel Kivuitu, said a separate register has been prepared for cases of double registration to ensure those who present themselves at polling stations are arrested and handed over to the police.

Kivuitu was speaking at Parliament Buildings where ECK held day-long consultations with representatives of political parties. All registered parties were invited for talks including Kanu, Democratic Party of Kenya (DP), Ford Kenya, Ford Asili, Social Democratic Party (SDP), Safina and Ford People.

..... Kanu was represented by acting secretary general, Julius Sunkuli, and executive officer, Mbaria Maina, while DP sent its secretary general, Joseph Munyao, and his deputy, George Nyamweya. Liberal Democratic Party was represented by former deputy speaker, Joab Omimo, and Ochieng Mbeo of the East African Legislative Assembly (Eala).

[Background Info. Kenya, page 869:a]

b. Tana floods kill 11, displace thousands: More than 11 people were feared dead and 20,000 others displaced following heavy rains in Tana River district, it was reported, Oct 31.

The rains which fell, Oct 29 night, resulted in raging floods from a collapsed dam which then wreaked havoc in Madogo division of the district.

(See Analysis, page 887)

Six bodies were recovered, but five more people were reported missing. A heavy downpour in the early hours of Oct 29, swept away hundreds of Manyattas at El Nino Camp and displaced at least 20,000 people. Madogo DO Ndambuki Muthike who led a rescue team said six bodies were retrieved, Oct 30.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

LIBERIA

a. Human rights defenders in detention: The president of the Coalition of Human Rights Defenders, Dempster Browne, was arrested in Monrovia, Oct 29, while the search is on for Aloysius Toe, secretary general of the coalition.

The head of the National Human Rights Centre, Blamoh Sieh, is also in detention for his alleged links with Toe.

According to the ministry of justice, attorney Browne is being held for calling on Liberians to join a peaceful march in solidarity with journalist Hassan Bility and others detained for their links with the LURD rebels.

President Charles Taylor had, October 28, warned that anyone joining the solidarity march would be "dealt with severely." Aloysius Toe is said to be wanted because documents linking him to the LURD rebels were found in his home. His wife was arrested and detained but later released.

President Taylor, Oct 28, promised to transfer Bility and his colleagues to the custody of the Liberia Muslim Council. He warned that prisoners' activities would be monitored and they would not be allowed to leave the country.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

LIBYA

a. Libya to leave Arab League: Libya has decided to withdraw from the Arab League, the government news agency announced in Tripoli, Oct 25.

The report, citing a statement by the ministry of African affairs, gave no reason for the decision.

However, Libyan officials cited the Arab League's 'inefficiency' in dealing with the crises over Iraq and the Palestinians.

In a statement by the official Libyan news agency, the ministry said an official notification had been sent to the League's headquarters in Cairo, Egypt.

In Cairo, then League's spokesman, Hisham Youssef, said the 22-nation organisation had received no official notice from the Libyans. However, he acknowledged that Libya had raised the possibility of a withdrawal with the secretary-general, Amr Moussa. "This is not a new idea," Youssef said. "It has been raised before but Gaddafi had told the secretary general that the idea was to be put on hold".

Arab League rejects Libya's demand: Libya's demand to leave the Arab League will not be carried out "for the moment"; Arab League secretary-general Amr Moussa said on Al-Jazeera satellite channel, Oct 28.

"Libya remains a member of the Arab League, notably in the present circumstances, and as a result its withdrawal request will not be implemented for the moment," he told the Doha-based station. "This message has been fully received.....but Libya is still part of the League and its request remains in the personal hands of the secretary general and will not be carried out for the moment". Moussa said, Oct 26.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, Madras, *Asian Age*, New Delhi)

[Background Info. Libya, page 832:a]

MALAWI

a. Court quashes order banning demonstrations: The High Court of Malawi has quashed the President's order banning demonstrations for or against the third term Bill, it was reported, Nov 1.

The President's ban was treated more like a derogation of the right to demonstrate rather than the slight limitation. The President may only impose such bans after the declaration of a state of emergency due to war or threat of war or widespread natural disaster. The constitution provides in section 44 that some of the rights in the Bill of rights may be limited, and such limitations must meet certain criteria.

The limitation must be reasonable, prescribed by law, necessary in an open and democratic society and recognized by international human rights standards.

Muluzi attacks Christians: President Bakili Muluzi, Nov 1, praised Muslim sheikhs for taking a leading role in the fight against HIV/AIDS but accused Christians for concentrating on the third term issue.

Speaking during the opening of the Ijtimah at Dedza Boma, Muluzi said a lot of religious groups have forgotten their roles and are only interested in the third term issue.

"These days what we are hearing is all about the third term issue. You go here it's third term, there its third term and over there third term no!...no!...no!...this is not so. We should take a leaf from these sheiks and I once again congratulate them for concentrating on the AIDS issue and not politics", Muluzi said.

The President also said that no matter how rich or influential one can be one day he will die and meet God.

"God will not be interested with our worldly positions. He will just look at our works. He has the biggest computers where he records our daily deeds and we should all fear God," the President advised.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MOROCCO

a. 49 die in jail fire: Fire raced through an overcrowded Moroccan prison, Nov 1, killing at least 49 inmates and injuring 34 people, government officials said.

About 40 inmates were injured, many due to smoke inhalation, in what was believed to be the worst fire ever at a Moroccan prison. All the dead were inmates of the jail and two prison staff were among the 34 people injured, the official said.

El Jadida is about 170 km south of the capital Rabat. The jail, which has a capacity for 1,000 inmates, was holding 1,313 prisoners at the time of the blaze.

(SOURCE: *Asian Age*, New Delhi)

MOZAMBIQUE

a. Beira-Zimbabwe railway reopened: The railway linking the central Mozambican port of Beira to Zimbabwe was reopened, Nov 1, after unexploded shells and other military ordinance were removed from the line.

The railway runs past the arsenal of the Mozambican Armed Forces (FADM) which caught fire, Oct 30, when it was hit by lightning. In the ensuing series of explosions, munitions were thrown out of the arsenal in all directions.

One explosion damaged the railway, and derailed a goods train. Other shells landed around the track, but did not explode.

They all had to be removed before the line could be re-opened. FADM sappers were involved in the work, while a team from the rail company, CFM, removed the derailed train and repaired the track.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

SENEGAL

a. Border dispute with Gambia revived: The border impasse of the past few months between Senegal and The Gambia has been revived, it was reported, Nov 4.

The Gambia Transport Union has accused its Senegalese counterpart of attempting to impose conditions inimical to Gambia's interest.

The enraged leader of The Gambia Transport Union Daddy Sowe who accused the Senegalese Transport Association of 'interfering in our affairs' lashed out at them for closing their side of the border and denying access to vehicles from The Gambia.

The border impasse comes notwithstanding Sowe's lengthy discussions with his Senegalese counterpart, Alhassan Ndoeye, recently. The meeting had concluded with no compromise in sight.

The Senegalese are demanding the construction of a bridge at Bambatenda -Yillitenda, to allow their vehicles unhindered access to The Gambia.

They are also calling for a total review of Gambia's transports laws, which Sowe as head of The Gambia's Transport Association has turned down because it compromised the country's right as an independent nation and that of the country's transport association to decide on such issues.

Following the impasse, confirmed reports speak of GPTC buses being stopped from entering Dakar as a protest by the Senegalese.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SIERRA LEONE

a. Government publishes national recovery strategy: The Sierra Leonean government, Oct 28, published a National Recovery Strategy that detailed the state of affairs in various sectors and targets for 2003.

The strategy is broken down into four priority areas: restoring state authority; rebuilding communities; peace building and human rights; and restoring an economy battered by a war that lasted from 1991 to early 2002.

With regard to the restoration of state authority, tangible progress had been made over 2001 in the deployment of key district officials while district councillors were to be elected in 2003, the report said. Most representatives of line ministries had returned to the districts, but all local government officials suffered from inadequate office facilities, logistical support and staffing conditions, it said.

The Sierra Leone Police (SLP) were deployed in all districts. However, although key infrastructure had been rebuilt and officers retrained and re-equipped, their capacity was generally constrained by the destruction of most police stations and barracks throughout the country, the report said.

A total of 700 new officers were recruited into the force in 2001-2002 and there were plans to recruit a further 1,000 in 2003. The SLP's strength in 2003 would be increased from the current level of 6,500 to 7,500.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SOMALIA

a. Warlords sign peace pact: The dawn of a new era broke for Somalia, Oct 27, when key warlords signed a peace accord to end hostilities.

They also agreed to implement fully the United Nations arms embargo for Somalia and combat all forms of terrorism to co-operate with the international community.

The leaders agreed by consensus to adopt two crucial documents in the first phase of the peace process, namely Declaration on Cessation of Hostilities and the Structures and Principles of the National Reconciliation Process.

The accord which was signed at Hotel Sirikwa in Eldoret brought together top warring faction leaders who agreed to bring about a ceasefire, thus ending 11 years of civil war in Somalia.

A ray of hope in bringing lasting peace to the war-torn Horn of Africa state was evident when each of the 21 warlords were called upon to sign the peace process.

Warlords want peacekeeping force: As the Somalia National Reconciliation peace process enters its second phase, warring leaders have appealed to the international community to despatch a peacekeeping force to Somalia, it was reported, Nov 2.

The leaders said the peace process will not succeed unless the international community begins disarming a section of the warring factions in the country.

"As we are busy negotiating for peace here in Eldoret, some of the warring groups have begun sporadic fighting in parts of Somalia, especially Baidoa and surrounding areas of Mogadishu," said one of the warlords. They blamed the technical committee for its failure in negotiating with the world on the possibilities of a ceasefire by deploying peace keeping forces.

At least 15 people are feared dead and over 40 critically injured in heavy gun-fire in Southern Somalia. The fighting took place between two rival clans, one allied to the Transitional National Government (TNG) and the other with the Ethiopian backed Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council (SRRC).

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Somalia, page 873:a]

SOUTH AFRICA

a. Soweto blasts condemned: A series of bomb blasts which rocked several areas of Soweto, Oct 30, leaving a woman dead and her husband wounded have been widely condemned. Oct 31

The blasts disrupted the rail network and left thousands of Metrorail commuters stranded.

The African National Congress (ANC) called on the law enforcement agencies to ensure the arrest of the perpetrators. The party also appealed to all South Africans to keep calm and assist police investigations into the matter.

The ANC parliamentary caucus said it would confidently vote in favour of all intelligence Bills coming before Parliament, Oct 31.

"These Bills seek to determine a clear co-ordination of the intelligence community so that they complement each other. This will assist the intelligence communities to act swiftly," said party chief whip Nkosinathi Nhleko.

Labour federation Cosatu said it was not hard to conclude that the attacks were part of the resurgent right-wing assault on the country's democracy.

The New National Party said the incident placed the focus on the proposed amendment to the Explosives Bill, which would be debated in Parliament soon.

Blasts being probed: Gauteng authorities were assessing the impact of the Soweto bomb attacks, Oct 30, as the damage to infrastructure it likely to have an effect on tourism in the province.

South Africa has been considered a safe haven for foreign visitors despite the considerable fall in the growth of tourism across the world following the September 11, 2001 attacks in the US. Tourism grew 7.2% between January and July 2002 in South Africa.

Mbeki pleads for calm: President Thabo Mbeki has appealed to all South Africans to 'remain calm' following the bombings in Soweto near Johannesburg, saying he had full confidence in the ability of the country's security system and that the perpetrators will be brought to book.

The President was addressing the media to mark the state visit of the Greek President Constantinos Stephanopoulos in Cape Town, Oct 30.

White extremists behind blasts?: White extremists were blamed for nine bomb blasts, Oct 30, which rocked Soweto, Johannesburg's sprawling black township, killing one woman.

Another potentially fatal bomb attack was averted when workmen disturbed a 22 pound haversack of explosives in the basement of a Buddhist temple at Bronkhorstspuit, east of Pretoria.

About 150 people, mainly Chinese immigrants from Taiwan, had gathered for a dedication ceremony at the new building.

An electrician kicked at the sack, causing a detonator to roll away and explode.

Thabo Mbeki, South Africa's President, gave warning at a press conference that the attacks could be the start of a Rightwing terrorist campaign.

"The information the government has had for some time indicates tht the Right-wing has the intention to conduct a campaign of this type to destabilise the country," he said.

Jackie Selebi, the police commissioner, said he suspected that "a major Right-wing organisation" was behind the explosions. Recently, a specialist police team had arrested 23

Afrikaners, some of them serving officers in the South African army. They are allegedly connected with a plot to stage a coup and restore white rule in South Africa.

b. More TRC files disappear: Former apartheid police files on Dumisa Ntsebeza, the former chief investigator of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), are among several that have disappeared from the safekeeping of the South African Police Service (SAPS) since 1998, it was reported, Oct 25.

The South African History Archive at Witwatersrand University, which put in a request to the SAPS in Durban on behalf of Ntsebeza for two files on surveillance activity on him in 1976 and 1977, said they had been told that the files were missing.

Files related to Operation Vula, an underground intelligence operation set up by the African National Congress during the apartheid years. Also missing are files relating third force activity in the North West.

In 2002, the archive reported that 34 boxes and two folders of documents taken by the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development from the TRC offices in 1999 had disappeared.

The TRC had learned that the security branch had destroyed most operational records. But some records had survived. Back-up tapes of the head office database were also located by the TRC.

The archive's deputy director Sello Hatang said that Nelson Mandela had imposed a moratorium in 1998 on the destruction of those files, which were to have been transferred to the National Archives.

[Background Info. South Africa, page 741:a]

c. Reckless car driver lynched: A reckless driver killed six people when he hit a group of mourners, Oct 27, prompting surviving funeral-goers to stone him to death and to set fire to his body, the police said.

The driver crashed his speeding BMW into the group, which has just attended a funeral in the northwestern Limpopo province town of Klipgat, and then tried to drive on, police inspector Tyuron Seate said, Oct 28.

He said four people were killed instantly and two more were pronounced dead on arrival at hospital.

The mourners were so angry with the BMW's driver, who tried to drive on after the crash, that a crowd of about 500 hauled him from his car, stoned him to death by the side of the road, and attacked police who tried to stop the mob burning his body.

(SOURCE: *Asian Age*, New Delhi)

SUDAN

a. Liberation factions to observe mines ban: Sudan People's Liberation Movement and Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLM/A) have resolved to adhere to the international total ban on anti-personnel mines, it was reported, Nov 2.

The groups also agreed to take disciplinary action against their commanders and fighters who failed to comply with their commitment against the use of land mines.

In a signed statement, the chairman of SPLM commission for external relations, information and humanitarian affairs, Nhial Deng, said they recognised the global scourge of anti-personnel mines especially in conflict-prone parts of the country.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SWAZILAND

a. Concern over attack on High Court judges: Amnesty International has expressed concern over the recent attempt by agents of King Mswati III to undermine the independence of the judiciary, it was reported, Nov 4.

The King's agents ordered the Chief Justice and two other High Court judges to drop the case brought by Ms Lindiwe Dlamini seeking the return of her daughter, Zena Mahlangu, who was taken away by them on Oct 9.

Neither the mother nor her legal advisers have been allowed access to Zena Mahlangu. Two lawyers appointed by the court to interview her have been repeatedly blocked by officials of the Royal Palace.

Amnesty International condemned the blatant threat against the integrity and independence of the judiciary. Over the last two years government officials have frequently attempted to reverse or circumvent court rulings. In a number of cases, the police have blatantly flouted the orders of the court.

On November 1, the judges were officially informed in writing by the Attorney General that if they continued hearing the case they must resign after issuing their judgment. If they failed to do so arrangements would be made for their removal from office.

Zena's boy friend: Zena Mahlangu, the teenager abducted by aides of King Mswati III, has a boyfriend, her mother, Lindiwe Dlamini said, Oct 27.

Dlamini said: "She has a boyfriend. They've been together over a year."

The Sunday Times has identified the boyfriend and spoken to his mother, but has been asked not to disclose his identity as "this would cause embarrassment to the king".

The boyfriend's mother showed the *Sunday Times* a picture of Mahlangu and her beau together. The distraught mother said she would explore all avenues to get her daughter back. "I don't want the king to be my daughter's husband . . . she has other plans for her life . . . I will fight this case until the day I die."

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Swaziland, page 874:a]

TANZANIA

a. Tanzania repatriates 12 Kenyans: Twelve Kenyans of Somali origin who entered Tanzania illegally and were convicted for the offence recently are to be repatriated, it was reported, Oct 29.

The 12, who were arrested in Mwanza after entering Tanzania through the Sirari border point, are expected back in Kenya after the Tanzanian government ordered them to leave.

Tanzanian state radio at the weekend quoted an immigration official, Rashid Matama, as saying the 12 Kenyans had no valid travel documents and had fake Kenyan ID card.

A private radio in Mwanza, "Radio Free Africa" quoted the Kenyans as claiming they had fled the country in fear of violence due to the impending general election.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

TOGO

a. Landslide win for ruling party in polls: The ruling Rassemblement du Peuple Togolais (RPT-Togolese People's Rally) won 72 of the 81 seats in legislative elections held, Oct 27, but boycotted by the main opposition parties.

Four other political parties and one independent candidate shared the remaining nine seats, according to provisional results announced, Oct 29, by a committee of seven judges.

International observers said the polls were "sincere, transparent, democratic and definitely credible". They noted "some minor problems, which were later rectified, with regard to voting materials, organisation and the voting process" but said these did not affect the validity of the election.

Opposition parties that boycotted the election formed a group called the Coalition des Forces Democratiques (Coalition of Democratic Forces). They said their priority was "the end of the RPT system and the departure of the head of state by 2003 at the latest, in keeping with the Togolese constitution".

b. Lome meet to discuss Ivory Coast coup: Talks between delegations representing Ivory Coast government and insurgents are scheduled to start Oct 28.

A seven-member rebel team was met at Lome airport, Oct 27, by Togolese foreign minister Koffi Panou, minister of defence and ex-combatants Gen Assani Tidjani, and the head of Togo's armed forces, Gen Zakario Nandja, official media reported in the Togolese capital.

The delegation included Guillaume Soro, secretary-general of the rebel's political arm known as the Cote d'Ivoire Patriotic Movement (MPCI - Mouvement Patriotique de Cote d'Ivoire). It also included Michel Gueu, formerly a colonel in Ivory Coast armed forces, and ex-soldier Tuo Fozie, one of the more visible of the insurgents' leaders. The government would announce the composition of its team, Oct 28, government sources said.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

TUNISIA

a. New political party recognised: A new political party, The Democratic Forum for Labor and Liberties, has been recognised in Tunisia, it was officially announced in Tunis, Oct 25.

Headed by Dr Mustapha Ben Jaafar, the new party was legally recognized, Oct 25. It will join six other opposition parties already active in Tunisia.

The other six opposition parties are "the Movement of Socialist Democrats" (created in 1983), "the Popular Unity Party" (1983), "the Unionist Democratic Union" (1988), "the Liberal Social Party" (1988), "the Progressive Democratic Party"/formerly "the Progressive Socialist Rally" (1988) and "At-Tajdid Movement" (1993).

The oldest and most influential of political party of Tunisia is the governing "Constitutional Democratic Rally" (RCD). Created in 1934 as the "Neo-Destour party," it had led the country's struggle for independence. At the end of colonial rule, in 1956, the party, renamed "the Destourian Socialist Party," played a crucial role in the young nation's modern state-building process.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

UGANDA

a. 250 killed by thugs in western Uganda: More than 250 people were killed by thugs in south-western region between January and September 2002, the police said, Oct 28.

Regional police commander Edward Ochom said, Oct 24, that at least one person was killed everyday. He said that about 95 people have been killed in Mbarara.

In the same period, Bushenyi lost 51 people, Kabale 30, Ntungamo 38, Rukungiri 24, Kisoro 12 and Kanungu 9.

Ochom said that 35 people were killed in April in the region and attributed it to rampant thefts that tend to occur during Easter.

Kony kills cop in Pader ambush: A policeman was killed, Oct 28, and a number of civilian passengers wounded when the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels ambushed a vehicle between Corner Abim and Amita government prison.

The ambush was near Agago bridge, about three miles from Adilang sub-county headquarters in Pader district. Police sources identified the dead officer as Nelson Omara, who was attached to Kalongo police post in Kalongo sub-county.

b. Millions of shillings misappropriated from missions abroad: An audit of Uganda's missions abroad has disclosed that millions of shillings in visa and passport fees, have not been remitted to the national treasury—suggesting that the money may have been misappropriated, it was reported, Oct 28.

A number of missions were also found to have overshot their expenditures by millions of shillings above the authorised spending - an act described by the Auditor General's report as "either unrealistic budgeting or weaknesses in expenditure control."

Several of Uganda's property abroad such as houses and vehicles are not insured, not only contravening the laws of the host countries, but also putting at risk property worth millions of dollars.

According to the Auditor General's report to parliament, the main culprits are Uganda's missions in Europe.

For example, none of the country's properties in Copenhagen, including vehicles, the chancery and official residence, were insured.

c. 20 Ugandans jailed abroad for drug trafficking: More than 20 Ugandans are serving sentences abroad for drug trafficking, it was reported, Oct 29.

CID director Elizabeth Kutesa said, "Between 1999 and 2002, about 20 Ugandans involved in drug trafficking have been arrested and are serving sentences in many countries."

She said: "The number could even be higher than that. These are already convicted. So it gives you an inkling of how wide the problem of drug-trafficking is."

Ms Kutesa made the revelations while opening a one-week regional course on drug investigative techniques for drug law enforcement officers in the East African region at Havana Hotel, Kampala. More than 30 police and customs officers from Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania and Rwanda are taking part in the workshop, which is the third of its kind organised by the Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Conference.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

ZAMBIA

a. Supreme Court adjourns Chiluba's immunity case: The Supreme Court, Oct 31, adjourned to November 21 the ruling on whether or not the Attorney General should be party to the appeal in which Chiluba is contesting the removal of his immunity.

Chief Justice Ernest Sakala adjourned the matter after lawyers representing the state and those representing former President Frederick Chiluba argued their cases. Chiluba's lawyers - Chifumu Banda, Robert Simeza and John Sangwa implored the court to dismiss the cross appeals of Attorney General and the 21 members of parliament who challenged Chiluba's decision to contest parliament's removal of his immunity.

Chiluba appealed to the Supreme Court after High Court judge Anthony Nyangulu sustained the National Assembly's decision to lift the immunity. The 21 members of parliament wanted to join the matter as interested parties contending that the High Court had no jurisdiction to review a decision made by the National Assembly.

Judge Nyangulu threw out with costs arguments by the members of parliament that the High Court had no jurisdiction to review National Assembly decisions. The state through the Attorney General cross-appealed against judge Nyangulu's holding that the court had jurisdiction to review National Assembly's decision.

b. 'Tembo murder witness' accidental death mysterious: Relations of Mwenda Namachila, a witness who was killed in a car crash shortly before testifying in the murder trial of slain politician Paul Tembo, have termed the accident as mysterious and urged the police to investigate what exactly happened.

A family spokesman said it was surprising that Namachila and another witness Levison Phiri died shortly before going to court to testify in a case where Clara, the widow to Paul Tembo had been charged with murder of her husband.

Namachila said in an interview, Oct 31, that his nephew had worked for the Paul Tembo family for a long time as a driver until the death of Tembo in 2001.

He said although the death of Mwenda could be accidental, the timing was questionable and police should strive to establish the truth.

[Background Info. Zambia, page 863:a]

c. 15 bars, school shut in crackdown: The Ndola health authorities have closed 15 business premises and a community school for not meeting the required health standards set by the cholera task force team, it was reported, Oct 30.

Ndola district health director, Mwila Lembalemba said, Oct 29, that more than 15 bars and restaurants had been shut after failing to meet the standards set.

He said the Maryland community school in Chipulukusu had been closed because it had no toilets, water supply, roof and other requirements.

He said the school has more than 150 pupils who were vulnerable to cholera and dysentery.

Dr Lembalemba said more than 15 businesses including restaurants, bars and taverns had been closed and other businesses will face the same if they do not comply.

(SOURCE: *Post*, Lusaka)

ZIMBABWE

a. War veterans plead not guilty: Four war veterans, Oct 23, pleaded not guilty in the Harare High Court to charge of murdering 48-year-old David Stevens, a white farmer.

The men allegedly abducted Stevens from his farm in the Macheke area, about 100 kilometres east of Harare, on April 15, 2000. Stevens was savagely assaulted and then shot dead at point-blank range with a shotgun, in the face and in the back.

President Mugabe said later Stevens, a member of the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), "had it coming to him". He went on to say that white farmers were "enemies of the state".

The killing was seen as the start of Mugabe's self-proclaimed war against the country's white farming community, which has left 12 farmers and 31 of their workers dead. Only 600 farmers out of 4,500 remain on their land and the once-thriving agricultural industry is in ruin.

A prosecution witness was quoted by the independent week *Financial Gazette* as telling judge Benjamin Paradza that he had seen the drunken veterans drinking Stevens' blood.

"One of them went and knelt over Stevens' body and brought a container filled with blood, which they mixed with alcohol and shared among themselves," the witness said.

A group of 15 was said to have abducted and tortured Stevenas. Five were arrested soon after the killing but they were

released in December 2000 when state lawyers said there was not enough evidence to prosecute them. After Stevens was abducted from his farm, he was briefly rescued by police and taken to the nearby police station. The mob of veterans then stormed the police station and dragged him away, in full view of the several officers on duty.

Then Commercial Farmers' Union also has copies of sworn affidavits from three white farmers, who tried in vain to rescue Stevens but were captured by the veterans. Police have had these eyewitness accounts of Stevens' "execution" since the week following the incident. Four of the veterans, Richard Svisviro, Muyengwa Munyukwi, Charles Matanda and Daniel Chitemkuteku have been rearrested for the trial. Police had not been able to trace the fifth, chief suspect Banda Katsvamudanga, since he was released in 2000, the *Financial Gazette* said.

The belated start to the trial has been greeted with surprise. Observers say that Stevens' murder had appeared to be one of hundreds of serious crimes carried out by Mugabe's militia in the last two-and-a-half years of state-driven lawlessness, either with no action taken against the culprits or with police refusing to obey court orders to arrest them.

[Background Info. Zimbabwe, page 850:a]

b. Policeman gets 5 years for attempted murder: A Chitungwiza regional magistrate, Oct 30, sentenced a police constable to five years in prison for attempting to kill a senior police officer at Chivhu Hotel two years ago.

Mrs Olyn Nzuma sentenced Mike Masiyambiri (22), to seven years in jail, two of which were suspended for good behaviour.

Although Masiyambiri had denied ever stabbing Inspector Nhamo Siyabonga, Mrs Nzuma said the court had gathered overwhelming evidence that he had attacked his boss.

"It is not true that somebody who stole your 30-centimetre long knife could be the person who attacked Inspector Siyabonga. This court is convinced that you carried the knife to the hotel which you later used in the attack," Mrs Nzuma said.

She said the attack was brutal as some intestines had been disorged and Inspector Siyabonga was lucky to have survived.

c. MP found dead in prison cell: A Member of Parliament of Zimbabwe's main opposition party, charged with murdering his wife, was found dead in his prison cell, police said, Oct 22.

The police said Learnmore Jongwe, a 28-year-old MP for the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), had been found dead at Harare's remand prison. The cause of death was not given. "We are still carrying out investigations", police said. Jongwe surrendered to police in July after his wife died in a stabbing incident at their home in Harare. Jongwe was the chief spokesman for the MDC, formed in 1999 and the strongest challenge to the President, Robert Mugabe's ruling ZANU-PF party. A lawyer, he became one of Zimbabwe's youngest lawmakers when he was elected to Parliament two years ago.

d. Libyan fuel deal faces collapse: The Libyan fuel deal has been mothballed amid revelations that government is illegally availing itself of Independent Petroleum Group (IPG) fuel and has to date built up a US\$18 million debt in three months, it was reported, Nov 1.

The Zimbabwe *Independent* has it on good authority that government despatched a team to Kuwait, led by Noczim chairman Charles Chipato and former intelligence operative Justin Mupamhanga to negotiate re-opening fuel links with the Independent Petroleum Group of Kuwait. IPG in October delivered, through the pipeline from Beira to the Mabvuku terminal, just over 85 million litres of fuel.

This is more than the current consumption of between 60 and 70 million litres per month. No Libyan product has, however, been delivered in the past six weeks despite the payment of US\$9 million by the Commercial Bank of Zimbabwe as part payment of the US\$65 million composite debt. Industry sources said the Libyan suppliers were currently secondary sources of the commodity as there were no real benefits from the Libyan arrangement. "In fact, the Libyan fuel is now 18% more expensive than what IPG is charging," the source said. The source said the government had kept the deal with the Libyans open for the purpose of goodwill.

[Background Info. Libya, page 858:a]

(SOURCE: *Independent*, Harare)

ANALYSIS

Tana River tribals fight over land, water

First there is the endless mooing, then the parade of hundreds and hundreds of cattle swimming across the Tana River, in Nago, Kenya, their heads bobbing above the brown water. The bulls and cows keep coming in wave after wave for about an hour.

Draped in red cloth and carrying long sticks, herdsman lead the cattle up the riverbank and into the drowsy farming village, where women are shucking corn and men are surveying their crops. The herders try to be mindful of the crops and houses as they lead their livestock both around the village and along a path

that winds among the farmers' homes. The farmers just shake their heads.

"Why are they here again?" asks Emma Gwinyo, 27, as she watches the cattle stomp over the muddy earth. "Their animals are going to eat all of our crops. They never go away. We don't want to share with them".

Here along the Tana River, and in countless other places across Africa, farmers and herders are in conflict. Their ways of life, as old and familiar as any on Earth, differ in almost every

way imaginable, yet they have one thing in common: They depend on water and land for their livelihood.

Often these natural rivals live side by side, competing for the same resources. Sometimes the rivalry turns violent, as it did here on March 7, 2001, when a fight over one patch of land near the Tana River ended with 100 people being slaughtered. All over the developing world, the struggle for scarce resources causes disputes that sometimes lead to well-documented wars and sometimes to skirmishes that never make headlines.

Last month, for example, fighting broke out in northeastern Congo between the traditionally pastoral Hemas and the Lendus, who are mostly farmers. Violence between the two groups has cost hundreds of lives over the past four years. The same week as the Congo violence, eight people were killed in Nigeria when a group of gunmen identified by locals as Muslim Fulani herdsmen attacked the Christian farming village of Maza.

Not quite a decade ago, one of modern Africa's bloodiest episodes erupted from similar causes. Hatred between Rwanda's Tutsi and Hutu tribes, stemming from colonial rulers' preferential treatment of the pastoralist Tutsis over the agriculturalist Hutus and from their competition for land and water in the tiny country, erupted into genocide in 1994. A state-sponsored campaign of killing by Hutu extremists led to the slaughter of more than a half-million Tutsis in 100 days.

In Ngao, the people are thankful that violence has been absent for more than a year. But "the tensions are here and will be here," said Abraham Daniel Mabombe, the chief of the area, who toured the village one recent day, supervising the reconstruction of houses burned in the clash last year. "The farmers want land and water to grow crops," Mabombe said. "The herders want land and water to raise their cattle. Does that make conflict hard to solve? Well, yes. Very. But we try anyway. We are aware of the problem".

Some of the tensions stem from the fact that the herders and the farmers have completely different economies. Many of the farmers grow food only to feed their families. They usually settle on plots of land for generations. They have strong communal responsibility, rarely selling what they grow to the outside world.

In contrast, cattle herders are nomadic. They are driven to different regions by where they can best feed and water their animals. They operate as capitalists, selling their cattle for around \$300 each when they need cash. They are unattached to the land, ready to move around the country to earn a living.

Culturally and physically the groups are also stunningly different. Most cattle herders are from Nilotic tribes, descended from the tall, slender, narrow-featured peoples of the Nile Valley. Farmers typically are shorter and stockier because their roots extend from the Bantu tribes migrated from western Africa to almost every part of the continent south of Sahara.

In a village called Sare B, herders of the Wardei tribe are regally draped in colourful gold and red locally made cloth. They

are Muslims, and the women cover their hair with shimmering scarves that flow over their long bodies.

The children wear bright silver hoops in their ears, and the women wear beaded bracelets. The men wear used wingtip shoes with no laces and walk with perfect posture as they herd their animals. The women collect water in gallon jugs from a murky stream, about a 20-minute walk from the village.

Although many herders are aloof, the farmers are talkative, even effusive. Unlike the herders, who speak only their native language, the farmers speak English. They are Christian, and missionaries built a school for their boys and girls, and a health centre for the farmers; the herders, who are building a mosque in their village, have no health centre or schools for girls.

The farmers say the herders are unclean because they deal with animals. The herders say the farmers are too aggressive and loud, and the women are too chatty with men.

But with all their differences, "both groups want the same things: water and land," said the Rev Sampson Maliwa, who has worked on a reconciliation project in the area.

Maliwa said that the weather played a part in exacerbating tensions here. A lack of rain has dried up smaller streams and forced herders to rely on the river more than ever. At the same time, the government started deeding land to the farmers, who had never held land titles. The herders complained that they were losing access to good grazing land.

On March 7, 2001, a 56-year-old schoolteacher named Ephiam Kiokomo went to farm his government-issued parcel of land along the Tana. A herder also showed up to graze his cattle. The two men argued, according to local officials, and Kiokomo was found dead, killed with a spear.

"That very day the violence spread all over the Tana River," said Mabombe, the chief. "The farmers came with machetes. The herders had bullets".

Now the herders say the fighting is over. They don't want to talk about it. Hostility simmers on the farmer's side as well. "We will not buy their milk," said Peter San Umur, a farmer. "We can't share anything with them".

Aid workers and a local government chief say they are hopeful that community talks and several projects will ease tensions. The Kenya Red Cross and the Swedish Red Cross are working on a project to build 35 wells to lessen both tribes' dependence on the river. In the villages, the wells are welcome, because the resource that everyone is fighting over is in fact a murky brew of brown water that causes diarrhoea and other waterborne illnesses.

"Clean water means health here," said Erik Pleijel, a well project manager with the Swedish Red Cross. "We are hoping the well will really ease some of the tensions". Aid workers said the two groups would not have to share any of the new wells.

—Emily Wax, *Washington Post*, published in *Deccan Herald*, Bangalore, Nov 7, 2002.

November 5—18, 2002

Vol III No. 23

ANGOLA

a. UNITA still holding illegal diamonds and weapons: A newly released UN sanctions committee report has said UNITA guerrillas possessed large quantities of illicit diamonds and hidden weapons, it was reported, Nov 16.

The sanctions committee said in the report prepared in October that it was worried about the chances of those weapons and diamonds being used to undermine the hopes of the Angolan people. Contraband diamond sales still take place in Angola. Business estimated at a million dollars per day is on, it said.

When renewing the sanctions committee monitoring mechanism in April, the Security Council demanded that a report on the activities of UNITA be submitted by October 2002, and a second one by December 13, 2002, six days before the expiry of its mandate.

The Security Council will be meeting on November 20 for consultations on its ongoing sanctions on UNITA.

The October report explains however that the individuals, governments and industrialists who actively backed UNITA war machinery in the past are no longer active, but warned that they simply represent an "iceberg tip" as the criminal networks that made profit out of the war in Angola were not totally identified.

[Background Info. Angola, page 865:b]

b. New ambassadors, provincial governors appointed: Angolan head of state Jose Eduardo dos Santos, Nov 14, dismissed the provincial governors of Uige (north), Lunda-Sul (northeast) and Kuando-Kubango (southeast), Cordeiro Ernesto Nzakundomba, Francisco S'zinho Chiuissa and Jorge Fernando Biwango, respectively.

President dos Santos appointed Lazaro Lixima as Uige Governor, Miji Muachissengue for Lunda-Sul and Joao Baptista Chindandi for Kuanco Kubango, whereas Anto nio Tonga, Silo M rtires, Moiss Chivemba and Jorge Mussongue were nominated deputy governors of Kwanza-Sul, Bengo, Bi and Benguela, respectively. President dos Santos also nominated the ambassadors to Greece, Argentina, Hungary, Poland and Mexico—Jaime Isalas Vilique, Fernando Dito, Joao Vahekeny, Liseth Nawanga Satumbo Pena and Jaime Furtado, respectively.

c. Over 50,000 cases of malaria recorded: At least 56,726 cases of malaria, which resulted in 1,158 deaths, were recorded during the first half of 2002 alone in Angola's central coastal Benguela province, the local health services announced, Nov 12.

It also announced that pregnant women and the children are the main victims of malaria, which is the illness that kills most in the region. The source said the families are too poor to buy anti-malaria tablets and pay doctors' consultation fees.

It added that to prevent and combat malaria, six fixed units and five mobile ones were set up throughout the province. Insecticides and mosquito-nets, were also distributed to the population.

(SOURCE: *Namibian*, Windhoek)

BOTSWANA

a. Government denies diamonds behind Basarwa relocation: The Botswana government has denied that diamonds were behind the controversial relocation of the Basarwa bushmen from the Central Kgalagadi Game Reserve (CKGR).

It has accused the British lobby group Survival International (SI) of a "campaign of deception", it was reported, Nov 11.

In addition, the Botswana human rights group Ditshwanelo, which is part of an NGO negotiating team on the future of the Basarwa, has distanced itself from SI's campaign which has focused on the alleged role of diamonds and the firm of de Beers. It said this "confrontational" intervention had stalled talks between the government and the negotiating team.

"Despite exploration over many years, beginning in the mid-1960s, no commercially mineable mineral deposit has been found inside the CKGR. There is neither any actual mining nor any plan for future mining inside the reserve," the government statement said.

A diamond deposit was discovered at Gope, inside the CKGR, in 1980 but after extensive testing, including the sinking of a trial shaft, it was determined that the deposits could not be economically mined. The area remained the subject of a retention licence, which temporarily protected certain rights which the former investors may still have, but all activity has ceased and there is no plan to resume, the statement said.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BURUNDI

a. Ceasefire talks break down: Negotiations between Burundi's government and the nation's largest rebel faction failed, Nov 9, to meet a deadline to sign a ceasefire agreement aimed at ending a 9-year civil war.

The leaders of 14 regional governments had given the main faction of the Force for the Defence of Democracy and the National Liberation Forces 30 days to agree to a ceasefire.

"We were not able to fulfill the directive by the summit to reach a ceasefire agreement", the South African Deputy President, Jacob Zuma, chief mediator, said.

[Background Info. Burundi, page 866:a]

b. Rebels warn civilians to flee military zones: Burundi's largest rebel movement, Nov 12, warned residents of the capital, Bujumbura, to leave areas near military establishments immediately for their own safety.

"The Conseil National pour la Defense de la Democratie-Forces pour la Defense de la Democratie [CNDD-FDD], is again warning inhabitants of Bujumbura to move far away," Gelase Ndabirabe, the movement's spokesman, said in a communique.

The warning had been given, he said, because of mounting government attacks despite the CNDD-FDD's unilateral cessation of hostilities in force since November 3. "We cannot remain with our arms folded, faced with this provocation," he said.

He said that since, Nov 12, government military aircraft and Rwandan government troops had been directing "unconventional bombs" on the communes of Bukeye, Teza, Muruta and Matongo, causing dozens of civilian casualties.

"These planes have backed an offensive of several infantry battalions of Burundian and Rwandan troops," he said. The Burundian military could not be immediately reached for comment.

[Background Info. Burundi, page 977:b]

c. Former President under house arrest: Former Burundi President Jean-Baptiste Bagaza was placed under house arrest in Bujumbura, a government official said. Nov 5

"We have uncovered that he has a plan to destabilise and even to shed blood," Salvator Ntihabose, the minister of home affairs and public security, told reporters in Bujumbura.

He was speaking after eight grenades exploded in the capital's residential districts of Ngagara, Nyakabiga and Musaga.

"Militants of Bagaza's Parena party wanted to dissuade people from going to work, children to school and merchants to the market," he added. Bagaza's residence was searched, Nov 2, and gendarmes arrested four of his colleagues: Parena secretary-general Leonidas Ntakare, permanent secretary Christophe Hicintuka, party spokesman Zenon Nimubona, and party member Benoit Ndurimana.

Meanwhile, the commander of the South African Protection Support Detachment, Col Degeode, said he had withdrawn Bagaza's protection because Bagaza had refused to cooperate with police forces and judicial authorities.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, Madras and *New Vision*, Kampala)

CAMEROON

a. Pledge to settle Bakassi dispute: The Presidents of Nigeria and Cameroon pledged, Nov 15, to pursue a peaceful settlement of the territorial dispute over an oil-rich peninsula, the UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, said.

"I'm very encouraged by the two meetings that we've had, the goodwill of the two leaders and their determination to resolve this issues peacefully, and I am sure that we will be able to do that", Annan said.

Presidents Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria and Paul Biya of Cameroon agreed to hold a summit meeting "at the earliest opportunity", Annan said. The UN chief arranged the talks after Obasanjo balked at accepting an October 10 World Court decision that upheld Cameroon's claim to the Bakassi peninsula.

"Nigeria has neither rejected nor accepted" the ruling, said Obasanjo.

UK-Germany agreement on Bakassi of 1913: The "Agreement between The United Kingdom and Germany respecting (1) The settlement of the frontier between Nigeria and the Cameroons from Yola to the Sea and (2) The regulation of navigation in the cross river" was signed in London on March 11, 1913 with maps.

The maps, signed by the British and German delegates on October 6, 1909, constitute part and parcel of the 1913 agreement, as provided for in its Article 30.

The first part of the agreement on Nigeria-Cameroon frontier contains thirty articles. The focus here will be to show how this part of the treaty lends support to Nigeria's rejection of the ICJ's ruling on the Bakassi dispute and why Nigeria should repudiate both the 1913 agreement and the ICJ ruling.

On the issue of the 1913 agreement, Articles 1-22 defined the boundary from Yola to the sea, while Articles 23-30 underscored the conditions for the validity of such definitions and the international character of the Akwayafe River which replaced the Rio Del Ray as the boundary between Nigeria and Cameroon.

For instance, Article 23 provides that "nothing in this Agreement shall prevent British or German vessels, whether public or private, from using the most convenient course between the open sea and the Akwayafe River, and from navigating that River without any differential treatment whatever".

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg and *Hindu*, New Delhi)

[Background Info. Cameroon, page 866:a]

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

a. Libyan planes bombs city north of capital: Two Libyan planes bombed the city of Damara, 76 km north of Bangui, Nov 15, in an effort to dislodge rebels believed to control the city, the UN office of the Resident Coordinator reported.

The planes bombed residential areas in Bambari following several reconnaissance flights, but no casualties were reported. No further information was available from the frontline on the Bangui-Damara road, Nov 17, and information from the north of the country was equally hard to obtain as rebel forces had systematically confiscated radio communications equipment, the UN office reported.

In anticipation of renewed conflict in the capital, Bangui, a general movement of people was taking place out of northern neighbourhoods in the city, sources said.

World Food Programme country director David Bulman said that the agency had propositioned food around Bangui with religious groups, who were ready to receive internally displaced people. UN humanitarian agencies remained unable to move beyond 10 km outside of the capital, Nov 17.

b. 750 Congolese seek refuge in embassy: Some 750 citizens of the Democratic Republic of the Congo have fled to their embassy in Bangui, fearing possible retaliation by city residents angered by the looting and rape reportedly committed by a militia from the DRC.

The troops had come to support government forces put down a recent attack by renegade troops, it was reported, Nov 8. "We offered them shelter and protection," one DRC diplomat said, Nov 7.

"We fear for our security in the neighbourhoods," Jean Pierre Dawili, of Gemena, northern DRC, said. Dawili, who has worked as a shoe shiner in Bangui for years, joined the other DRC citizens who began streaming into their embassy on November 1, asking to be repatriated. They said Bangui residents had shown them hostility after the forces of the Mouvement de Liberation du Congo, led by Jean- Pierre Bemba, came to the aid of CAR President Ange-Felix Patasse during the October 25-31 invasion by forces of the renegade CAR armed forces chief of staff, Gen Francois Bozize, now exiled in France. Bemba's troops were accused of looting and raping city residents. The rebels were expelled from Bangui and fled northwards along the road leading to Chad.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

CHAD

a. Human Rights Watch to honour Africa justice activist: Human Rights Watch will give its highest recognition to Souleymane Guengueng, a torture victim who leads the campaign to bring the former dictator Habr of Chad to justice.

Founder of the Chadian Association of Victims of Political Repression and Crime (AVCRP), Souleymane Guengueng has worked to record and publicize the atrocities of Habr's regime (1982-1990).

Habr lives in exile in Senegal, where he was indicted two years ago on charges of torture and crimes against humanity, after a complaint filed by the AVCRP with the support of a coalition led by Human Rights Watch. Habr's victims are now seeking his extradition from Senegal to stand trial in Belgium.

"Souleymane has harnessed his own suffering into a campaign to break the cycle of impunity that has plagued his country and all of Africa," said Reed Brody, Human Rights Watch's special counsel for prosecutions. "In the process, he has set a vital precedent so that the voices of victims can be heard loud and clear", Brody said.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

CONGO (DR)

a. Humanitarian catastrophe in Ituri: A growing humanitarian catastrophe is unfolding in Ituri district in Democratic Republic of the Congo (DR), as rebels and ethnic militia battle for dominance, according to a UN official.

"We are greatly concerned," Hamadoun Toure, the spokesman for the UN Mission in the DRC, told reporters in Kinshasa, Nov 13.

"The confrontation between rebel factions supported by Uganda on the one hand and ethnic militias on the other is producing a humanitarian catastrophe."

He said humanitarian organisations had confirmed a large number of people had been displaced by the fighting. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has reported at least 500,000 displaced people in the district.

Museveni meets rebel leaders: Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni met two Congolese rebel faction leaders, Nov 15, in an effort to stop the tribal clashes in Ituri.

Museveni's meeting with RCD-ML's Mbusa Nyamwisi and Thomas Lubanga of the Union of Patriotic Congolese (UPC) was intended to pave the way for the Ituri Pacification Commission.

A communique issued at the end of the meeting said the two rebel leaders agreed to immediately cease hostilities on all fronts and Mbusa's group further agreed to cease all military and political activities in Ituri which may affect the pacification process.

Mbusa undertook to move all his forces from areas around Bunia to areas beyond Komanda, some 80km southwest of Bunia.

b. President suspends officials named in UN pillage report: President Joseph Kabila, Nov 11, suspended six officials whose names have appeared in a UN report on the pillage of the nation's natural resources.

In a decree published in the state media, Kabila said he had suspended the minister of security and public order, Mwenze Kongolo; the minister of state for the presidency, Katumba Mwanke; the minister of planning and national reconstruction, Denis Kalume; the ambassador to Zimbabwe, Mawampanga Mwanananga; the administrator-general, Kazadi Nyembwe; and the former chief executive officer for the state-run diamond company, MIBA, Jean- Charles Okoto.

Kabila's director of cabinet, Evariste Boshab, said the President was satisfied with the UN report revealing that "the war in Congo was driven by the greed of those who had attacked" the country.

"The reason for Rwanda's presence in our country is not due to security considerations; it is above all economic," Boshab said.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Congo (DR), page 867:a]

EGYPT

a. World War II mines still haunt Alamein, 3,000 killed in past 20 years: The guns that thundered across the desert of El Alamein during World War II still haunt people living in the area, a report said, Nov 12.

Egyptian specialists said that in the past 20 years, some 3,000 people have been killed and 5,000 maimed by explosives of the 1942 battle in the Arab country, whose only role was to provide the open desert where the foreign armies fought.

They said 18 million landmines and unexploded bombs still litter the Western Desert, prized by the warring armies because it was the gateway to the Suez Canal and West Asia oil supplies. Some of the countries who placed the mines said the figures is closer to two million.

Veterans from Britain and its allies joined Germans and Italians at desert cemeteries to pay tribute to the fallen recently. But, for some, the former combatants have for too long ignored the deadly problem they created.

"They come. They hold their ceremonies and they leave," said Sami Ebadah, chairman of the Landmine Struggle Centre in Egypt.

"We're not asking for charity but only what is our right, that the landmines and ordnance be extracted," he said. It is not only human casualties that are causing Egypt to suffer. With most of Egypt's roughly 70 million people crammed into a narrow strip of land along the Nile valley and its delta, the government wants to develop other areas such as the northern coast.

But oil exploration, as well as agricultural and tourist development along the sparkling blue coast become all the more expensive when land has to be cleared of old bombs first.

"Our message is that Egypt is suffering, from the end of the war until now. But now we are suffering more because we need the Western Desert for development," said Kadry Said, head of military studies at Cairo's al-Ahram Centre for Strategic Studies.

(SOURCE: *Asian Age*, New Delhi)

ERITREA

a. EC to resume aid to Eritrea: The European Commission has agreed in principle to resume development aid to Eritrea, after a 14 month gap, it was reported, Nov 15.

"This is the first step, after the difficulties we've had in the past toward a political dialogue," Athanassios Theodorakis, deputy director-general of the commission, said at a news conference, Nov 14, in Asmara, the Eritrean capital.

The commission suspended all development aid to Eritrea in September 2001. Since independence on May 24, 1993, the commission has given Eritrea 55 million euro in development aid.

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

ETHIOPIA

a. Drought, lack of food aid hit millions: The UN World Food Programme recently warned that it was concerned about the lack of food aid pledges needed to help feed millions of Ethiopians threatened by starvation, it was reported, Nov 15.

WFP alone needs US\$80 million worth of food for the first quarter of 2003, and a similar amount is needed in bilateral contributions to the government and NGOs, WFP said in a release. With a serious drought worsening in many regions of Ethiopia, the number of people needing food aid is expected to rise sharply from the current six million to between 10 to 14 million people in 2003.

"Donor contributions have covered the most acute needs over recent months, but by early 2003 the number of drought affected Ethiopians will rise dramatically — the food aid pledges received so far are nowhere near enough," said Georgia Shaver, WFP representative in Ethiopia.

"In the worst-case scenario, up to 14 million people will require around two million tonnes of food aid, costing US\$700 million. If donors respond quickly, we can still help avoid immense human suffering in Ethiopia," she said.

b. Anti-AIDS taskforce criticised: Ethiopia's anti-AIDS taskforce came under fire, Nov 6, for failing to fund projects aimed at tackling the disease—despite the \$59 million loan from the World Bank.

Dr Yigeremu Abebe, a board member of the executive committee of the taskforce, said the bank loan should have been ploughed into anti-AIDS projects.

The National HIV/AIDS Secretariat has spent just one fifth of the funds in the last two years despite the pandemic sweeping the Horn of Africa. And fears are now mounting that if the taskforce does not spend the money, it will not be able to access the anti-AIDS grant to Africa by the World Bank.

"It is surprising that only 20 per cent of the money has been spent given the scale of the problem in the country," Dr Yigeremu said.

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

GAMBIA

a. Press union to sue government: The Gambia Press Union (GPU) will be taking government to court over the recently enacted controversial Media Commission Bill, it was reported, Nov 14.

Demba Ali Jawo, president of the GPU, told the *Daily Observer* that his union had already set up a committee that had worked out the modalities of challenging the draconian media Bill in the courts. He said they would be pursuing litigation in a week or two.

"Though the Bill had already been assented to by the President, it is not too late for the government to review it before

the Supreme Court declares it unconstitutional and strike it out," said Jawo. He said it was obvious that the government had a hidden agenda in the way the Media Commission Bill (now Act) was drafted.

"We were asked to propose a Bill to the Attorney General's chamber which we did, and at the end of the day a final draft which was totally different from what the GPU proposed was published, and the GPU was not even consulted before the final draft was accepted," he said.

The GPU, he said, was not opposed to a Media Commission Bill because it is a constitutional provision. "We are only opposed to the draconian nature of the Bill." He said he was convinced that the Supreme Court would find certain provisions of the Media Commission Act unconstitutional.

[Background Info. Gambia, page 819:a]

b. Sex workers arrested: Scores of prostitutes were arrested when police raided brothels and bars in the Greater Banjul Area, it was reported, Nov 12.

Sources said the raids were carried out shortly after members of the Supreme Islamic Council (SIC), paid a courtesy call on President Jammeh, urging a crackdown on immoral activities such as prostitution.

More than 70 prostitutes have now been arrested and detained at the Kairaba and Bakau police stations. Some scantily clad women spotted along Kairaba Avenue were also arrested a couple of days back. Meanwhile, President Jammeh had earlier on taken a tough stance against brothel owners.

He had warned landlords whose compounds were being used as brothels to evict their tenants before January 2003 or face possible forfeiture of their property to the State.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

GHANA

a. 5 Armed men rob Salvation Army boss: Five armed robbers attacked the residence of the divisional commander of the Salvation Army church at Nkawkaw, Nov 3, and brutally assaulted occupants.

Police source told *Chronicle* that the robbers numbering five with locally manufactured pistols besieged the residence while the commander and his family were asleep.

The robbers forced the doors leading to the room open, brutally assaulted the family and took away items such as video deck, tape recorder, three brief cases containing four Ghanaian passports belonging to the commander James Odure and Mrs. Odure and other family members.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

KENYA

a. Minister quits, joins opposition: Minister Joseph Nyaga, Nov 12, resigned from the cabinet and joined the opposition on the eve of election.

Former presidential trouble shooter Mark Too also declared he was joining the opposition to contest the Eldoret South seat.

Both men are joining the National Rainbow Alliance (NARC), which is scheduled to start nominations from November 20.

Nyaga said it would be difficult to successfully defend his Gachoka parliamentary seat while campaigning for KANU presidential candidate Uhuru Kenyatta.

"I have travelled around my constituency over the last few days and listened to my constituents. I have, after much reflection come to the very difficult conclusion that their views do not reconcile with my action in seeking support for Uhuru Kenyatta," he said.

He read out a one-page statement to the press at a Nairobi hotel accompanied only by his bodyguard and an official from the public relations firm.

Oddly, the minister resigned only a day after presenting his nomination papers to KANU headquarters at Kenyatta International Conference Centre.

Nyaga said: "My decision to resign from the government and KANU has not been easy. As you well know, my father played a pivotal role in national politics both before and after independence and indeed as a founding member of KANU."

b. 2 die in bandit attack: Tension gripped Isiolo town after bandits attacked a vehicle belonging to an aide of a parliamentary aspirant, Nov 14.

The attack left two people dead and eight others critically injured. A Land Rover vehicle which left the town for Merti trading centre at 11 am was ambushed by an unknown number of bandits at Sharp hills at around mid-day along the Isiolo-Mogadisho road.

The vehicle belonging to one Dadhe Boru was sprayed with bullets which shattered the windscreen and deflated the front tyres. A home-guard identified as Galgalo Abduba was killed on the spot while nine others were critically injured.

The second victim whose identity was not immediately established died while undergoing treatment at Isiolo district hospital. Local district commissioner, John Chege, confirmed the incident which occurred along the Isiolo/Meru North border.

Chege ruled out politics as the cause of the attack and urged area residents to desist from spreading unfounded rumours, which he said could spark-off acts of violence among rival supporters in Isiolo North constituency.

Boru is a close associate of Dr Mohammed Abdi Kutu, who is contesting the Isiolo north parliamentary seat on a KANU ticket. The over-loaded vehicle was carrying 13 passengers who included Kutu's poll agent. They were travelling to various stations in Merti Division to prepare for the KANU parliamentary nominations.

c. Ugandan jail escapee dodges Kenya police: A Ugandan national who escaped from a Turkish jail recently is wanted by Kenyan police in connection with car thefts and drug trafficking, it was reported, Nov 18.

A trap laid by police in a plush Kileleshwa apartment saw two accomplices of the wanted man nabbed, but he escaped.

And in the process, police said they have unearthed a major motor vehicle theft and drug trafficking syndicate masterminded by Ugandans. The syndicate has been smashed by the Kenya Police Special Crime Prevention Unit (SCPU). The two Ugandans in custody are the prime suspects but the one on the run is believed to be the kingpin. The suspects are being detained at Gigiri police station.

The deputy head of SCPU, senior superintendent Joseph Ngisa, confirmed the arrests, saying that they cornered the two suspects in an apartment, Nov 15. Ngisa told *East African Standard* that acting on a tip off, a trap was laid at an apartment in Nairobi's Kileleshwa area during which they caught two of the suspects.

Ngisa who identified the arrested suspects as Silaiti Ssemwanga and Richard Nserekho, both Ugandans, said another suspect identified as Abdulrahub Kayondo escaped the dragnet. Ngisa said the suspect on the run is also wanted in Turkey for similar crimes, "and we are in the process of approaching Interpol for assistance," he said.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

LIBERIA

a. Aloysius Toe charged with treason: The National Human Rights Centre of Liberia, a consortium of nine local human rights groups, escorted its project officer, J Aloysius Toe, to the police headquarters, Nov 6.

According to a release issued by the Centre, Toe was escorted to the police headquarters by Father Robert Tikpo of the Catholic Church. Toe was later charged for treason by the government. It may be recalled that on October 29, the government in a press statement issued by the justice department accused Toe of collaborating with the dissident LURD group, which is currently fighting to unseat the Taylor government.

Toe's arrest was ordered a day after the Liberia Coalition of Human Rights Defenders held a prayer service in solidarity with the plights of fellow detained human rights defenders, Journalist Hassan Bility, Sheikh K. M. Sackor and others who have been detained for over four months without charge. The human rights groups' action came as a result of the government's persistent refusal to honour several writs of habeas corpus filed on behalf of the detainees.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Liberia, page 881:a]

LIBYA

a. Libyan envoy denies collapse of fuel deal: The Libyan ambassador to Zimbabwe, Mohammad Azzabi, said, Nov 11, despite some problems in the fuel deal, his country was still committed to supporting Zimbabwe's fuel needs.

He dismissed reports that the oil deal with Libya had collapsed, saying relations between the two countries were good.

"As with any commercial transaction the world over, hiccups are bound to occur here and there, but that does not constitute a collapse of our commitment to Zimbabwe. That commitment is total and above small hiccups that may occur from time to time," he said.

Azzabi was responding to a story in *The Daily News*, which said the oil deal with Libya had collapsed. The newspaper quoted Azzabi as saying the reasons for the collapse of the US\$360 million (Z\$19,8 billion) supply deal between Zimbabwe and Libya were commercial and not political. Azzabi also denied the story which said Britain had persuaded Libya to cancel supplies to Zimbabwe.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Zimbabwe, page 887:d]

MALAWI

a. Police disperse crowds against third presidential term: Malawi's parliament ended its three-week sitting on a lacklustre note on November 1 after the much-talked about Bill seeking to extend the presidential term failed to take off.

Instead the limelight was stolen by a demonstration which turned violent as police dispersed critics demonstrating against the Bill which sought to pave the way for President Bakili Muluzi to stand for a third term of office in 2004.

The controversial Bill seeks to amend the Constitution to lift restrictions on the terms of office of the President. But government representatives could not shed light on whether the Bill would be tabled or not in future.

The minister of justice and attorney general Henry Phoya was quoted by the newspapers as saying the decision to come up with the new Bill came from the public. It would be tabled if the people wanted it, he said.

While parliament was winding up its three-week business in the capital, Lilongwe, there were ugly scenes in the commercial hub, Blantyre, where violence interrupted a planned public demonstration against proposals by the government to lift constitutional restrictions on the terms of office of the President.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Malawi, page 881:a]

MAURITIUS

a. SADC parliamentary assembly ends: The plenary assembly of Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) parliamentary forum which opened, Nov 14, at the Mauritian city of Grand Gaub ended, Nov 15.

Leader of the Angola delegation to the meeting is parliament speaker Roberto de Almeida. Among other issues the agenda included the role of SADC members of parliament in the fight on poverty, regional integration, gender and HIV/AIDS.

The committee urged the plenary assembly to strive for the inclusion of the principles of gender equality in the preamble to the objectives of the constitution of the Forum.

The assembly was recommended to instruct the forum secretary-general to start working on the transformation of the Forum into a regional parliamentary structure taking into account the experience of the West African legislative assembly.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MOROCCO

a. 49 killed in prison fire: At least 49 people were burnt to death in a prison yard blaze in the Moroccan capital Rabat, reviving a debate about conditions in the kingdom's notoriously overcrowded jails.

Many of the 49 killed in the blaze at Sidi Moussa Prison, on the outskirts of the Atlantic coastal town of El Jadida, were in crowded prisons, it was reported, Nov 8.

The fire broke out in one of the jail wings at around 1:30 am and smoke quickly filled three other sectors. Firemen brought the blaze under control at around 3:00 am. Six of the injured were still in serious condition.

Abderrahim Jamai, the head of the Moroccan Prisons Observatory (OMP), a non-governmental organization with representatives from several human rights groups, said the blaze was the worst ever in a Moroccan prison. The OMP leader called the fire a scandal that "most certainly resulted from a lack of maintenance" in Morocco's notoriously overcrowded prisons, known for their appalling conditions.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MOZAMBIQUE

a. New general secretary for Renamo: The national council of Mozambique's main opposition party, the former rebel movement Renamo, Nov 16, chose Viana Magalhaes as the party's new general secretary.

The 33 year old Magalhaes has a degree in linguistics, and joined Renamo in 1992 - thus he is not linked to Renamo's military wing, and did not play an active role in the war of destabilisation.

Speaking to Mozambican Television (TVM), Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama defended the appointment of Magalhaes as part of a policy of promoting a younger generation of politicians.

Renamo's last general secretary was Joaquim Vaz, elected at a Renamo congress a year ago. He lasted just eight months in the job.

Vaz was forced to resign in July, after his plans to visit the party's offices in the provinces were blocked by other Renamo leaders. He faced opposition because of his friendship with Raul Domingos, the former head of the Renamo parliamentary group, who was expelled from the party in 2000.

Immediately after his appointment, Magalhaes said that his top priority was to prepare Renamo for the municipal elections of 2003, and the general elections scheduled for 2004.

b. Defence lawyers threaten to boycott Cardoso murder trial: Augusto Paulino, the judge in the case of the murder of Mozambique's best-known journalist, Carlos Cardoso, Nov 15, confirmed that the trial will begin, Nov 18.

Paulino thus rejected a demand from lawyers defending the six men charged with the murder that the trial should be moved elsewhere.

The lawyers - Domingos Arouca, Simiao Cuamba, Abdul Gani, Eduardo Jorge and Samuel Valentim - are threatening to boycott the trial, if it goes ahead inside the prison.

Arouca told reporters, Nov 15, that the trial would not be open to the public. "We don't want a secret trial", he said. "We don't want trials in places that are not public, and where there is no free access".

However, the Maputo city court has repeatedly stressed that the trial will be public. Anyone interested in attending will just go to the prison. There is thought to be space for at least 100 people to attend - which is a much larger capacity than any of the rooms in the Maputo city court building itself.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Mozambique, page 871:a]

NIGERIA

a. Miss World contest heats up: As 91 of the most beautiful women in the world arrived in the Nigerian capital of Abuja, Nov 11, for the preparatory rounds of the Miss World Contest on December 7, the government breathed a sigh of relief.

The glittering international event, which was also supposed to be a showcase for Nigeria, had already threatened to fall apart as several high profile contestants pulled out in protest against a Nigerian court, which sentenced a woman to death by stoning. While the international beauty queens campaigned for the lifting of the sentence, Nigeria was battling to keep the Miss World beauty contest on track.

Among those who took a high profile moral stand against the stoning were contestants from Denmark, Iceland, Norway, France, Belgium, Switzerland and the Ivory Coast, some citing deep conviction and others expressing their doubts in tears. As the beauties gave Nigeria the cold shoulder, the government feared an international loss of face.

Organisers downplay controversy: The world's most beautiful women have arrived in Nigeria to take part in the Miss World, ending fears the event would be marred by a boycott in protests over death sentences hanging over two young mothers.

Welcoming the young women, the junior foreign minister, Dubem Onyia, tried to draw a line once and for all under the controversy that has dogged preparations for the 52nd Miss World beauty pageant.

"No Nigerian has ever been stoned to death and we will never allow any Nigerian to be stoned," he declared, to applause from the contestants. Several beauty queens had threatened to boycott the event in protest against the Islamic Sharia courts in northern Nigeria, which since 1999 have been trying to reintroduce a series of harsh punishments, including stonings.

Amina Lawal and an unmarried pair of former lovers—Fatima Usman and Ahmadu Ibrahim—have been sentenced to death by stoning for having sex out of wedlock and are currently waiting for dates to be set for their appeals.

But senior Nigerian officials have insisted that their appeals will eventually be successful, arguing that Sharia criminal law is unconstitutional. The Miss World president, Julia Morley, and most of the invited beauty queens have accepted the government's assurances and are determined to go ahead with a month-long programme of events culminating in a December 7 closing ceremony.

b. 168 held for trafficking in women: The Nigerian Immigration Service has made 168 arrests in connection with trafficking in women and children at various points of departure from the country in the last three months, it was reported, Nov 18.

The arrests include 76 young girls, 70 young boys and 22 persons suspected to be members of various syndicates which specialise in human trafficking. These figures were disclosed by the comptroller-general of the Nigerian Immigration Service, Lady Uzoamaka Nwizu, in her office.

Lady Nwizu said the arrests were made at various border posts, airports and within towns in Ogun, Borno, Katsina, Kano, Lagos and Sokoto States. The arrested persons are from different states of the federation.

The comptroller-general explained that the arrests were part of the benefits of the patrol, surveillance and monitoring, mounted in the states she described as "source state." The syndicates attempted to freight their victims who are young boys. She said all units of the service in every nook and cranny of the country are on the alert and are being equipped to pursue the Immigration Service's resolve to tackle this nefarious trade head on.

c. Sacked workers resume attacks on governor Tinubu: Former workers in the Lagos state civil service, who were relieved of their duties in the last rationalisation exercise carried out in the state have resumed their campaign against the state governor, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, it was reported, Nov 18.

The workers, led by Ayodele Akele, have been attacking the state governor over what they call his refusal to pay them their entitlements.

Since the crusade against the governor started, the affected workers had besieged the Lagos State House of Assembly several times, imploring members of the House to plead their case before the governor.

After about three months break, the sacked workers besieged the House, Nov 13, to complain that they are going through hard times.

Speaking to reporters, Akele said the sacked workers would not waver in their demand for justice.

He stated that public servants do not deserve the ill-treatments being meted to them by the governor.

"Take note, no matter your tricks, no matter the intimidation, we are resolute on this matter and there is no going back until the issue is resolved," Akele declared.

d. 5 students suspended for joining cult: Authorities of the University of Ilorin have suspended five students arrested by the Kwara state police Command for involvement in cultism and armed robbery as well as illegal possession of firearms, it was reported, Nov 18.

The deputy director (information) Alhaji Isiaka Ali-Agan named the 5 students.

He said the measure was to enable police undertake proper investigation into the incident and determine the culpability or otherwise of the students.

Ali-Agan maintained, however, that should they be indicted they would be expelled from the university as the authorities have assured that only mature students worthy in learning and character shall be forwarded for degrees and relevant certificates.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi, *Statesman*, Calcutta and *Hindu Madras*)

RWANDA

a. Former minister's genocide trial ends: The genocide trial of former Rwandan minister of information, Elizer Niyitegeka, before the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) closed, Nov 15, after hearings of 12 prosecution witnesses and 11 witnesses for the defence.

The trial, which opened in June, and has been running alternately with other trials in the same chamber, has been one of the fastest in the history of the court.

Niyitegeka, 50, is on trial for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes mainly in connection with killings in his home area of the Bisesero hills in the West Rwanda region of Kibuye. He was minister of information in the "government of rescuers" that reigned over the period of the genocide. About one million ethnic Tutsis and politically moderate Hutus were killed in the 1994 genocide according to an official census by the government of Rwanda.

Niyitegeka's defence team has mainly presented a case of alibi. Most defence witnesses have testified that Niyitegeka wasn't in Kibuye during the period in which he allegedly committed the crimes.

[Background Info. Rwanda, page 871:a]

b. Uganda, Rwanda sign memorandum: Uganda and Rwanda have signed a memorandum of understanding, spelling out ways of harmonising their relations further, it was reported, Nov 16.

The memorandum was signed, Nov 12, at a meeting at the White Horse Regency Hotel in Kabale. It covered subjects of standing procedures on the movements of the two armies and the establishment of the army liaison officers at the common border.

It was a follow-up meeting between the two countries' defence ministers in Kampala earlier.

The Rwandan army delegation comprising 14 senior officers, had among others, Lt. Col. Peter Mbakaliba who met with the Ugandan army team led by Lt. Col. A. Kasita Gowa, the brigade commander (Mbarara) who represented the second division commander. The four-hour meeting was attended by the British defence adviser, Lt Col Chris Wilton Col Dan Gafiza, the Byumba Brigade chief, led the Rwandan team.

"Any difficulty between the two countries can be resolved from an early stage giving it no room for escalation.

"We look forward to seeing Rwanda and Uganda resolving their differences now and in the future," Wilton said.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SENEGAL

a. Kenya Airways seeks niche in W Africa through Air Senegal deal: Kenya Airways (KQ) has signed a bilateral agreement that will give it competitive fares to market it into the network covered by Air Senegal International, it was reported, Nov 13.

The agreement also gives the national carrier access to other West African countries where it does not operate directly.

The components of the agreement involved the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU), special prorate agreement (SPA), bilateral interlink traffic agreement (BITA) and a general sales agent (GSA).

Under the GSA, Air Senegal International will represent KQ in Senegal, Mali, Guinea Bissau and Cape Verde, and act as its (KQ's) feeder from its networks into Abidjan. On its part, KQ will be Air Senegal's feeder from its network into Abidjan.

"These agreements establish the foundation for a deeper relationship with Air Senegal International, currently the fastest growing airline in West Africa. It will also give Kenya Airways an important foothold in the expansive West African market," said Jason Kapkirwok, KQ director for group strategy and industrial affairs.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SIERRA LEONE

a. Editor jailed for nine months: Reporters Without Borders (RSF) has protested against a nine-month prison sentence imposed, Nov 12, on a Sierra Leonean editor, Paul Kamara.

His daily newspaper, *For Di People* was closed for six months.

Kamara was found guilty of 18 counts of libel and defamation by the High Court in the Sierra Leonean capital, Freetown. He was also fined 4.5 million Leones (US \$2000).

The charges against Kamara were filed on April 5 by an appeal court judge, Methland Tholla Thomson, in connection with several articles in his newspaper which called the judge "a thief", "a criminal", and "a constitutional fraudster".

The newspaper also ran a photo of the judge with the caption: "This man is dangerous". RSF secretary-general Robert Menard said: "We call on the competent authorities to dismiss the charges against this journalist, order his immediate release, and authorise the reopening of *For Di People*."

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

SOMALIA

a. Pact to ban use of landmines: Somalia's various political factions and the Transitional National Government attending reconciliation talks in the Kenyan town of Eldoret have signed a commitment to ban use of landmines in areas under their control, it was reported, Nov 13.

The leaders signed the agreement with the Geneva-based humanitarian organisation Geneva Call, and committed themselves to "destroy and clear landmines in areas under their control", said Awad Ahmad Asharo, the justice minister of the self-declared autonomous region of Puntland, northeastern Somalia.

The leaders also committed themselves "not to use antipersonnel mines for combat purposes" in the future.

Asharo said that the Puntland authorities would not only ban the use of landmines but "will make sure that no new mines are brought in".

He said the Somali leaders who signed the agreement requested the international community to help landmine victims in the country.

Asharo said the Somali groups had signed the agreement as "non-state actors", since Somalia was not party to the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty.

The office of the UN resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia welcomed the agreement. "We certainly welcome any agreement which results in safer conditions for the Somali communities, including the ban on the use of landmines and the cooperative efforts to clear existing mines", Sonya Green, the spokeswoman for the office, said.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SOUTH AFRICA

a. White supremacist terrorist attacks: A right-wing extremist group has claimed responsibility for a series of bomb explosions in October, bringing fears of a resurgence of white supremacist terrorist attacks across South Africa.

The "Warriors of the Boer Nation" sent letters to several national newspapers accepting "full responsibility" for the blasts,

most of them in the black township of Soweto, and said that they marked the "beginning of the end" of the African National Congress government.

Calling for the release of 35 people arrested on various charges of treason and terrorism in recent months, including Tom Vorster, alleged to be the leader of the Boeremag, or the so-called Boer Force. Warriors threatened to mount a campaign of bombings in the run-up to Christmas if its demands were not met. The Boeremag is already implicated in a conspiracy to overthrow the government.

Sally de Beer, spokeswoman for South Africa's National Commissioner of Police, said that the letters "appear to emanate from members of the Boeremag, who described themselves as Warriors of the Boer Nation. Until we find evidence to the contrary, we are assuming it is authentic".

The letters came after the publication of photographs of six men wanted in connection with right-wing activities, including bomb attacks in Johannesburg and Pretoria on October 30. More than 80 extreme right-wing groups are thought to be operating in South Africa.

All share a white supremacist ideology that casts Afrikaners, the descendants of Dutch and French settlers, as "Gods' chosen people" and the indigenous inhabitants as inferior "mud people".

Police ready to deal with bomb threats: Police said they were on red alert to deal with bomb threats by right-wing extremists or anyone who wished to terrorise the public and cause instability during and after the festive season.

The police' tough stance followed a few bomb threats at some public areas in the country with the most recent being the telephonic bomb scare made to the Nelspruit Riverside Mall management in Mpumalanga by an unidentified woman, Nov 14. Police investigated the threat and found it to be a hoax.

In a separate incident in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, a college was evacuated and a street was cordoned off following a bomb scare. The area was then searched in what was the second bomb hoax in two days. Police said a secretary at Oval College received a call saying there was a bomb on the ninth story of the building.

The extremist Boeremag group suspected of planting the Soweto bombs in October recently sent letters to the country's media houses threatening authorities with a series of bombs during the festive season. Speaking to BuaNews, police spokesperson Martin Aylwald warned the public to desist from making hoax claims. He called on communities not to panic should such a threat be made, as police would always investigate them.

Senior Superintendent Aylwald said that police took the threats seriously and would deal harshly with anyone found making hoax threats. Suspects stand to be thrown behind bars for 15 years or fined between R2,000 and R25,000 should they be found guilty under the Arms and Explosives Act.

Asked if police were ready to deal with the Boeremag threat to disrupt the festive season, Aylwald said authorities were busy tightening their grip on terrorism.

b. Pretoria may bail Harare out of oil crisis: As petrol supplies run dry in Zimbabwe, South Africa sent strong signals, Nov 11, that it would consider a request for aid to its crippled northern neighbour with fuel.

Petrol queues formed in Harare, Nov 11, as senior SA and Zimbabwean ministers met in Pretoria for routine bilateral talks.

Pretoria is keen to pressure the Zimbabwe government into talks with the opposition.

In answer to a question about the possibility of fuel aid for Harare, foreign minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, who hosted the talks with Zimbabwean foreign minister Stan Mudenge, said "something like that could be discussed". She said any fuel aid from SA would be made openly and with public knowledge. This was not raised at the meeting, Nov 11, as energy ministers were not present.

c. Four Hells Angels arrested, another shot dead: Four men, allegedly members of the Hells Angels motorcycle group, were arrested in Johannesburg, Nov 8, for various crimes, including drug-making, police said, Nov 9.

Crime intelligence divisional commissioner Rayman Lalla said three of the men, aged between 30 and 45, were arrested in Sandton for allegedly operating a clandestine drug laboratory.

Items seized included an unlicensed shotgun, a large quantity of unlicensed ammunition, three plastic packets containing the drug CAT, one plastic packet of dagga, three money bags containing cocaine, a small quantity of Ecstasy tablets, and various chemicals and equipment used in the manufacture of CAT.

Lalla said the three would appear in the Wynberg Magistrate's Court, Nov 11. They would be charged with manufacturing and dealing in illicit narcotics as well as the possession of unlicensed arms and ammunition.

The men were arrested following an intelligence operation by members of the organised crime unit, the SA Police Service, and the police's head office in Pretoria.

The fourth man was arrested in Primrose Hall, near Bedfordview after he was allegedly found in possession of three superbikes that were suspected to have been stolen. Police also seized 103 Ecstasy tablets, a small quantity of cocaine and CAT, as well as one unlicensed handgun with a silencer and ammunition.

(SOURCE: *Times*, Lusaka, *Statesman*, Calcutta and *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

SUDAN

a. Ceasefire with rebels extended: The Khar-toum government and the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement and Army (SPLM/A) agreed, Nov 18, in Nairobi, Kenya, to extend a memorandum of understanding on the delivery of humanitarian assistance and the cessation of hostilities until March 31, 2003.

"This will enable the Machakos peace process to begin again after a quick holiday break so it is very good news," said US assistant secretary of state for African affairs, Walter H Kansteiner in Washington. The talks have broken off because of pending Kenyan elections, Ramadan and Christmas.

In a separate agreement, also signed, Nov 18, both sides agreed to "general principles for sharing revenues and natural resources".

Khartoum has agreed that the southern Sudan will be "equitably represented" in the national legislature, civil service and cabinet in any future peace deal. Both parties agree to look for ways to design a judicial system.

"These are all very important parts of a larger power sharing agreement which will continue to be ironed out in the coming weeks and months," said Kansteiner.

The peace talks, facilitated by the Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), in the Kenyan town of Machakos in July 2002, had made progress quickly enough to surprise many.

[Background Info. Sudan, page 873:a]

b. Deadly disease threatens southern Sudan, says MSF: A serious bout of the deadly kala azar disease (symptomised by acute fever), which hit parts of southern Sudan about six weeks ago, is now reaching alarming levels, it was reported, Nov 18.

According to an international medical relief organisation, Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), more than 1,000 patients are currently undergoing treatment, and the figure is likely to increase.

A press statement from MSF said its projects in Eastern Upper Nile State are treating 406 and 210 patients in Lankien and Malakal towns respectively, while another programme in Umm el Kher in Gadaref State is taking care of 414 cases.

"The number of admissions continue at a rate of 100 per week in Lankien alone," Dr Yoseph Melaku, who had just arrived from the affected areas, said.

Melaku described the outbreak as severe, saying in previous cases, the number of patients hardly exceeded 200 at high season, while during low season, only about twenty people suffered serious attacks. He noted that malnutrition, displacement and poor access to health care reduce people's natural immunity and that such conditions are responsible for widespread outbreaks of such infections.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SWAZILAND

a. Swazi chief prosecutor resigns over abducted bride: Swaziland's director of public prosecutions Lincoln N'Garua said, Nov 15, that he had no intention of withdrawing charges he laid against the country's attorney-general Peshaya Dlamini, despite being threatened with dismissal and deportation.

He also resigned in protest. The government has yet to respond. N'Garua laid a charge of sedition against Dlamini after he (Dlamini) gave an ultimatum to the three high court judges hearing an application from the mother of a girl allegedly abducted by King Mswati III's aides.

Dlamini told the judges to drop the case or resign. His four-page letter was hand-delivered to minister of justice Maweni Simelane and copied to the attorney-general and the cabinet secretary. N'Garua alleged that the ultimatum he received undermined and subverted the independence of the office he holds. He said he could not reasonably tolerate working under a government which could deliver such an ultimatum.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Swaziland, page 884:a]

UGANDA

a. 14 Kony rebels surrender: At least 14 armed LRA rebels surrendered in Pader district in the last three days following a hot UPDF offensive, security sources said, Nov 17.

The army said it fought three battles with the rebels, Nov 15, killing 23 rebels. The first battle took place in Obolokome in Lira-Palwo, the second in Kibong hills and the third at Opok in Oryang parish.

Col. John Mugume, the UPDF 5th division commander, could not be reached as he was reported to be personally commanding UPDF forces combing suspected LRA hideouts in Pader.

The Regional Police Commander, (RPC) Marshall Odur, said many rebels, under the command of Vincent Otti, were hiding in Pader. He said many of the rebels had been killed.

Odur said the rebels were being vigorously pursued by the UPDF and had been forced to divide into smaller groups.

"Kitgum, Lira and Apac are currently very peaceful," he said.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Sudan, page 885:a]

ZAMBIA

a. Former minister admits helping rig polls: A former Zambian minister has said that he helped rig the 2001 elections which brought President Levy Mwanawasa to power.

Michael Sata, now leader of the opposition Patriotic Front party told the Supreme Court the ruling Movement of Multiparty Democracy (MMD) executed his "rigging plan" after he resigned from the government and the MMD, it was reported, Nov 14.

"I put the strategy (to rig the elections) in place but it has worked against democracy. It has even done harm to me....I am guilty of misleading myself because the strategy affected the opposition political parties and undermined the democratic system," Sata said.

Sata's testimony was part of an election petition by the main opposition leader Anderson Mazoka, who is challenging the

legitimacy of Mwanawasa's election and says pre-poll campaigning was marred by corruption and abuse of state funds.

Sata gave no details of how the rigging was carried out but said the intelligence services had been involved. He accused the ruling party of diverting funds from the Treasury to Mwanawasa's successful 2001 election campaign. He said the MMD diverted money from the state power utility Zesco and the state oil procurer Zambia National Oil Company (ZNOC), which has since been liquidated.

The former minister without portfolio and MMD party general-secretary said he knew how the MMD diverted funds from the Treasury because of the positions he once held.

Sata was once a member of the MMD and the former President's closest ally, but the opposition leader resigned from the ruling party after former leader Frederick Chiluba picked Mwanawasa as the party's presidential candidate.

Zambian laws prohibit the use of state funds for campaigning, and courts can nullify an election and order a fresh poll if it is proved state funds were diverted to a political party.

Sata said the party used state funds to buy 350 vehicles for Mwanawasa's campaign. "The 350 vehicles that were procured (by the MMD) were paid for by the government through the office of the president (secret service)", Sata told Chief Justice Ernest Sakala and six other judges.

Sata did not give the amount paid to a private firm which bought the vehicles, but said Mwanawasa was given 150 million kwacha (33,000 dollars) from the Treasury every week for his campaign during the run-up to the December 2001 elections.

[Background Info. Zambia, page 874:a]

b. Zambian, South African police arrest Rex Mwanawasa's killer: The Zambian police and their South African counterparts have arrested a suspect in connection with the death of President Levy Mwanawasa's younger brother, Rex, it was reported, Nov 11.

Police spokesperson Brenda Muntemba said the suspect would appear in a South African court, Nov 12. She refused to disclose whether or not the suspect is female or male saying those details would be given after the suspect's appearance in court.

Muntemba said a team of Zambian officers was dispatched to South Africa soon after information about Rex's death was received, Nov 9.

Rex was found dead in his hotel room in Pretoria.

Muntemba said the team has been working with South African police until the arrest was effected.

(SOURCE: *Zambian*, Lusaka)

ZIMBABWE

a. Tony Blair and top officials banned: Zimbabwe has banned the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, and scores of his top officials from travelling to Harare.

The government imposed visa requirements on British citizens in retaliation for European sanctions, state radio reported, Nov 8.

Britain announced, Nov 7, the most Zimbabweans will need a visa to enter the country, a change of policy aimed at reducing the number of Zimbabweans violating British immigration rules.

The move came months after the European Union placed a travel ban on all Zimbabwean cabinet ministers and ruling party officials after March presidential elections that many independent observers condemned as flawed.

b. US fugitive hides in Zimbabwe for 10 years: American fugitive James Kilgore who was arrested in South Africa recently for terrorist crimes committed in the US in the 1970s, lived a normal life in Zimbabwe for 10 years without anyone suspecting he was on the run, it was reported, Nov 15.

Those who knew him said he was "quiet", "thoughtful" and always willing to help but hardly talked about himself. The FBI had been looking for him for 26 years before police arrested him in Cape Town, Nov 8.

A friend said he first met Kilgore, who was now known as James Pape, at Ranche House College in 1982 where he was taking Shona lessons together with other expatriates who had moved to Zimbabwe at Independence.

According to the friend Kilgore was a mathematics wiz who also taught at the Harare Polytechnic's department of developmental studies.

"He was a quiet person and was very helpful," said the friend. "He was super-bright and was willing to help. I remember that he mastered Shona within a short space of time."

Kilgore moved to Zimbabwe in 1980 and lived in Eastlea along Mutare Road with his American girlfriend Terri Barnes whom he later married when they moved to South Africa in 1991.

Both Kilgore and his partner wrote articles and contributed to books in Zimbabwe, including school textbooks.

They later continued with their academic life in South Africa where Kilgore was a researcher at the University of the Western Cape. They lived in Claremont where they were picked up, Nov 8. It is believed the FBI tipped off the South African police.

(SOURCE: *Independent*, Harare and *Hindu*, Madras)

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ANGOLA

a. Landmine explosion kills 7 MSF staff: Medicines Sans Frontieres (MSF), Dec 2, said it would temporarily reduce its activities in the Angolan region of Mavinga following a landmine explosion which killed seven people and left six others wounded.

The NGO said in a statement that the MSF vehicle involved in the incident was travelling from Cunjamba, north of Mavinga, where medical staff had spent the day carrying out vaccination programmes. Most of the victims were Angolans working in the vaccination team.

According to the United Nations, Angola is one of most heavily mined countries in the world. Estimates for the number of landmines range from six to 20 million resulting in one of the highest rates of landmine injuries per capita in the world.

b. Journalists union mourns death of veteran scribe: Angola's Journalists Union (UJA) over the weekend expressed sorrow for the death of Sebastiao Coelho, considered to be one of the greatest professionals of journalism in the country, it was reported, Nov 25.

In a note to Angop, the union expressed its heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family and praised the job done by journalist Sebastiao Coelho for the development of journalism in Angola.

(SOURCE: *Namibian*, Windhoek)

BURKINA FASO

a. Preaching a new AIDS message: The mosques in Burkina Faso are preaching a new message—tolerance for people living with HIV and AIDS, regardless of religion.

"In the beginning the sensitisation was only taking place in the mosques where we taught abstinence before marriage and fidelity," explained Souleymane Kone, a member of the Islamic coordination committee against AIDS and sexually transmitted infections.

"But we have decided to strengthen the commitment of Muslims against AIDS because we realised that the infected persons are our brothers, sisters, children and parents. At all levels the fight against AIDS is the affair of the whole population because it is not only the 'sexual wanderers' who get infected,"

he said. The plan involves a "humanitarian caravan" to tour the country, providing counselling and information on HIV/AIDS. Some 150 of the poorest affected families would also receive financial assistance.

"Our strength lies in our members first, and then comes the financial aid," said Kone. "We are going to get out of our mosques and go to the people to insist that they must take adequate measures so that the pandemic regresses in our country."

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BURUNDI

a. Technical group formed to implement ceasefire deal: Burundian negotiators agreed, Nov 22, to set up a technical working group to discuss details of the implementation of a ceasefire between the government and two rebel factions, the office of South African Deputy President Jacob Zuma said, Nov 25.

It said the working group would start deliberations as soon as possible in the Tanzanian commercial capital, Dar es Salaam, and report during the next meeting.

The leaders of two armed groups fighting the transitional government in Burundi were, Zuma's office said, expected to sign an "act of commitment" that would "pave the way for their integration into the transitional institutions".

This was decided during a meeting in Dar-es-Salaam of the three signatories to the Burundi ceasefire agreement. It was attended by Burundi President Pierre Buyoya and the Speaker of the Transitional National Assembly, Jean Minani; the Jean-Bosco Ndayikengurukiye wing of the Conseil National pour la Defense de la Democratie-Forces pour la Defense de la Democratie (CNDD-FDD); and Alain Mugabarabone's Parti de Liberation du Peuple Hutu-Force nationale de Liberation. The largest CNDD-FDD faction, led by Pierre Nkurunziza, has failed to sign a ceasefire deal and has instead continued the war.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Burundi, page 866:a]

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

a. Fierce fighting in the north: President Ange-Felix Patasse of the Central African Republic (CAR) announced in a nationwide address, Nov 25, that fierce fighting was in progress, 157 km northwest of the capital, Bangui.

There were plans to hold talks on national reconciliation by the end of December, he said.

"As I speak to you now, fierce fighting is taking place in Bossembele between our valiant army and the Chadian aggressors," he said.

He did not say whether other northwestern towns like Bossagoa, 305 km from Bangui, where government troops are being supported by air strikes, were under government control, nor whether the main road to Cameroon via Bossembele was still open to traffic. If the road were closed then Bangui, which depends heavily on exports, would rapidly run out of imported goods, which come mainly through the Cameroonian port of Douala.

In this his first speech to the nation since an abortive rebel invasion of Bangui on October 25, he said reconciliation talks were "indispensable" for national cohesion. "I intend to have talks very soon with the leaders of political parties and the civil society," he said.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Central African Republic, page 878:a]

CONGO

a. President gives rebels one month to surrender: The President of the Republic of Congo, Denis Sassou-Nguesso, Nov 18, gave rebels fighting in the Pool region until December 18 to surrender their arms.

"Government forces which operate in the region will have the task of opening humanitarian corridors to facilitate the coming forward of the young strays," he said.

He promised the rebels their personal safety but declined to say what action he would take if they failed to meet the deadline to surrender. The announcement was made at a march organised by the Convention for the Restoration of Peace in Pool, a body headed by minister for commerce, consumption and supplies, Adelaide Moundele Ngollo.

On August 20, 2002, Sassou-Nguesso made a similar appeal to militiamen fighting with rebel chief Federic Bitsangou, alias Pasteur Ntoumi, after which 250 fighters surrendered to government forces.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

DJIBOUTI

a. US warns of new attacks in east Africa: The United States said, Nov 30, it had received information that terrorist attacks similar to the anti-Israeli strikes in Kenya could be repeated in Djibouti and Yemen and urged US citizens there to take security precautions.

In separate statements, Dec 2, the State Department warned that the potential for Kenya-like terrorist attacks throughout East Africa, particularly in Djibouti, and in Yemen was high.

The statements did not identify the source of the threats or the attacks in Kenya, but said that in Yemen there were signs associates of Osama Bin Laden's Al-Qaeda network were planning new strikes.

Both statements noted the November 28 suicide bombing of an Israeli-owned hotel in Mombasa and the attempted downing of an Israeli jetliner as it took off from Mombasa airport and there were indications that terrorist groups were planning similar strikes. Meanwhile, Kenyan police, Nov 30, said they had narrowed their list of people to question about the Mombasa attacks to 10 Pakistanis and Somalis.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Djibouti, page 879:a]

EGYPT

a. UN asks Egypt to end use of torture: The United Nations has told Egypt that it must stop the use of torture.

The UN's Committee against Torture expressed concern at the "widespread evidence of torture and ill-treatment in administrative premises", it was reported, Nov 3.

It also singled out Egypt's long-standing emergency law, which the government says are necessary to deal with terrorist threats, as one of the main reasons that torture is so prevalent.

The Times reported, Nov 18, that Reza Pankhurst, a Briton detained in Cairo, had inserted the word "lies" into his signed "confession" after he had been subjected to three days of electric shocks, sleep deprivation and sexual threats.

As a signatory to the 1987 UN Convention against Torture, Egypt is obliged to report to the committee periodically to show that it is respecting the convention's rules.

Egyptian and international NGOs have long claimed that torture is routine in Egypt. On November 13, Amnesty International released a report in which it said the practice was systematic. Gehad Madi, Egypt's assistant foreign minister for human rights, described the claim as absurd.

"We have individual cases where the torture was committed and proven and these officers were convicted," he said. But rights activists say that officers are prosecuted only in cases that result in deaths or severe disabilities.

Muhammad Zarei, the head of the Human Rights Centre for the Assistance of Prisoners, an Egyptian NGO, said that he welcomed the committee's findings, but they would have to be followed up by government action.

"We hope the Egyptian government will follow the committee's conclusions," he said. "But there needs to be more

cooperation between different branches of the government and between the government and NGOs".

"For instance, the committee asked the government delegation how many instances of capital punishment was implemented in the last five years," Zarei said.

"The reply was that they don't have any statistics about that. Nor can they figure out the total number of detainees in Egyptian prisons. This is wrong".

The Egyptian government said in a report in the UN committee that defendants used accusations of torture as a defence tactic in court. It said heavy-handed tactics were necessary to fight terrorism. But the committee, which had praised recent steps by Egypt to halt torture, said no exceptional circumstances could be invoked as a justification.

(SOURCE: *Times*, London and *Statesman*, Calcutta)

ERITREA

a. Opposition groups planning 'government-in-exile': Eritrean opposition groups, currently meeting in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa, are planning to set up a government-in-exile, sources at the meeting said, Oct 22.

Some 25 delegates from 14 organisations are meeting under the umbrella group, the Alliance of Eritrean National Forces (AENF).—They say—they are arranging to hold a 'national conference'.

"The aim of the conference is simple," one source said. "It is to set up a government-in-exile and run it as a government until we are in a position to replace President Isayas Afewerki."

Among the key delegates is a prominent opposition figure, Hiruy Tedla Bairu, the son of Eritrea's first head of state during the federation with Ethiopia. He is being tipped to take up the role of executive secretary of the opposition group. He is also the founder of a new opposition movement, the Eritrean Cooperative Party.

The main aims are to "sensitise the population to a change in regime and to mobilise the armed forces behind them", the source said.

"We are trying to mobilise ourselves now because we think the situation has got so dire," he added. "We want international support and feel that it will come."

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

ETHIOPIA

a. Food crisis in Ethiopia: Ethiopia is once again facing an enormous emergency, requiring food assistance in 2003, it was reported, Nov 29.

Save the Children (UK) has been working continuously in Ethiopia since 1973, responding not only to the current

emergency but also the famines of 1973-74 and 1984-85. In between famines neither Save the Children nor the people of Ethiopia has been standing by idly waiting for the next crisis. Numerous programmes have been launched, and the best minds available have concentrated their efforts on policy and activities to help attain sustainable livelihoods.

However, many factors have combined to overwhelm the efforts to deal with the root cause of the famines, resulting in the underlying vulnerability.

(See Analysis, page 910)

To better understand the nature, extent, causes, and trends in destitution in Ethiopia, Save the Children, along with the Institute of Development Studies of the University of Sussex, developed a study in the very poor northeastern highlands of Ethiopia in Amhara region.

The British government agreed to fund the study, and the Amhara National Regional State became the partner in the development and implementation of the study.

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

[Background Info. Ethiopia, page 856:a]

GAMBIA

a. Fresh arrest of Gambians in America: More than a dozen Gambians were arrested in the American state of Kentucky recently after a Nigerian who was on the run over a criminal offence had surreptitiously sneaked into the area, *The Independent* reported, Nov 29.

The Nigerian was declared wanted by the United States police after he was found to be behind a series of forgeries involving some false social security numbers, which black immigrants were reportedly acquiring to augment their job status. The cards were said to have been widely distributed to an extent that they were difficult to distinguish from the authentic versions.

Among those arrested were Musa Kinteh, Batoru Sanneh, Omar Njie, Ismaila Fatty and Ahmed Ndow who were kept at a Kentucky police station over the weekend.

Although it is not clear from where the Nigerian had entered into Kentucky, unimpeachable sources claimed that for the past six months, he was on the run across the United States, where he is linked to numerous 'paper forgeries' for immigrant black communities, wanting to regularise their status and enable them pick up employment.

b. Police arrest self-proclaimed 'God': Serigne Modou Abib Secka aka Ndigal from Kerr Mot Ali in Upper Saloum was arrested by the serious crimes unit at the police headquarters in Banjul, it was reported, Oct 31.

He was alleged to have proclaimed himself as "God" and had a large following in the Central River Division and some parts of the Kombos.

Serigne Secka was arrested recently by police commissioner in his compound in Upper Saloum. The self-proclaimed 'God' was also alleged to have built a Kaaba in his compound and claimed that the well in his compound contained the holy water of Zam Zam. He was alleged to have started writing his own Koran because he claimed that the Holy Koran had "errors".

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

GHANA

a. Female condom promotion launched: The Society for Women Against AIDS in Africa (SWAA-Ghana), a branch of SWAA International, Nov 27, launched a female condom promotion campaign at the British Council in Accra.

Ms Charity Binka, president of SWAA-Ghana, said the objective of the society is to use the introduction of the female condom to sensitize, educate and raise the awareness of Ghanaian women about the advantages associated with the use of the condom in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

She said in their quest to control their sexual lives, women should see the use of the female condom as a major breakthrough, "since there could be no talk about women empowerment without the talk about sexual and female reproductive health."

Ms Binka said with the introduction of the female condom, women are better guaranteed their safety and protection from AIDS.

She said with the female condom, a woman could take control of the number of children she wants to have.

She said SWAA is promoting female condom use on a countrywide basis and has trained community based distributors like hairdressers, hoteliers, drinking bar operators among others in the use of the condom.

Over 30,000 female condoms have so far been distributed through SWAA's networks in the ten regions of Ghana.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

GUINEA BISSAU

a. Elections set for February: General elections are to be held in Guinea-Bissau on Feb 23, President Kumba Yala announced, Nov 25.

The announcement came just over a week after Yala dissolved parliament and dismissed the Social Renovation Party (PRS) cabinet led by Prime Minister Almara Nhasse, replacing it with a caretaker administration.

Yala had accused the legislature, which he dissolved on November 15, of subversion while he accused the cabinet, sacked on November 17, of corruption, BBC and the Portuguese news agency Lusa reported.

Yala came to power in January 2000. Since then, the country has been wracked by crises, including a rebellion by members of the former military junta in November 2000, a coup attempt in December 2001, and the dismissal of several ministers in recent months.

Opposition parties recently demanded Yala's resignation, blaming him for Guinea-Bissau's economic crisis and political instability.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Guinea Bissau, page 832:a]

KENYA

a. 14 killed in suicide attack on hotel; missiles fired at Israeli plane: Suicide bombers blew up a hotel full of Israelis in Kenya, Nov 28, killing 14 persons minutes after missiles narrowly missed an Israeli airliner taking off nearby.

Israeli and Kenyan officials swiftly blamed the Al-Qaeda network, while the previously unheard-of "Army of Palestine" sent a claim of responsibility to Reuters. Police said they were questioning two persons near the scene of the hotel bomb.

Witnesses spoke of Israeli tourists and other survivors, streaked with blood and dust, staggering to the beach from the shattered Mombasa Paradise resort hotel and screaming for water after the attackers rammed a car bomb into the lobby.

There were discrepancies in the casualty figures. "There should be initial indications that 14 persons have died," Kenya's interior minister, Julius Sunkuli, said.

Wreckage of the bombers' car was left 15 metres from the smouldering rubble of the entrance to the hotel, reported to be Israeli-owned, where most guests were Israeli. "Around 7.30, we heard a massive explosion.

The entire building shook," Kelly Hartog, a witness, wrote on the website of Israel's *Jerusalem Post*. "I saw people covered with blood, including children. Everyone seemed to be screaming".

Minutes before the hotel blast, missiles were fired at an Israeli Arkia airliner, carrying 261 passengers as it took off from Mombasa's airport.

"About two km from the airport, two missiles were fired at the aircraft from a white Pajero (jeep) by some people who are suspected to be of Arab origin. Both missiles missed the aircraft" the spokesman for police, Kimgori Mwangi said.

"We spotted two white smoke trails passing us on the left side from the rear to the front, and disappearing after a few seconds," the pilot, Rafi Marik, said.

Kenyan security sources said it was believed the attackers used shoulder-borne missile launchers. The hotel attackers were also described as bearing Arab features and driving a four-wheeled-drive Pajero they had turned into a suicide bomb.

Israeli and Kenyan officials were quick to accuse the Al-Qaeda network. If true, those would be the first direct attacks on Israelis by the Saudi fugitive, Osama Bin Laden's group. A statement faxed to Reuters in Beirut, however, said the attacks were carried out by the "Army of Palestine" to mark the anniversary of the 1947 UN resolution partitioning Palestine between the Arabs and the Jews. There was no confirmation of the claim.

12 foreigners including 6 Palestinians held: Police said, Nov 29, they were holding 12 foreigners over the twin bomb and missile attacks on Israeli tourists in Mombasa, after Israel vowed to hunt down all those behind the bloodbath.

"We have one American lady, one Spanish man.....there are six Pakistanis and four Somalis," a Kenyan police spokesman said.

.....The US State Department said among those held were an American woman and her non-American husband, a permanent US resident.

The first two people detained said they were from Florida, the manager of Le Soleil Beach Club, Ben Wafula, said.

He said the "Italian or Spanish" looking man and the blonde woman checked into his hotel on November 26 and had tried to check out, Nov 28, about two hours after the suicide bombing of the Paradise Hotel.

Wafula said the pair were detained after his staff made a routine call to police, who had asked all hotels in the area to notify them of any people checking out following the blast. The couple had phoned Spain soon after the bomb blast, he added.

It was unclear what evidence the police had against the 12 detainees. The Pakistanis and Somalis were arrested, Nov 28, for entering Kenya illegally and only later came under suspicion by investigators probing the anti-Israeli attacks, police said.

Israeli survivors were flown home in an Israeli air force plane which also brought back the bodies of the three Israelis killed, two brothers aged 13 and 15, and a 61-year-old man. Among the other victims were Kenyan dancers who had been welcoming tourists in the hotel lobby when the bomb went off.

"Terrorism is dangerous, not only to Europe and the US, but also to Africa, and we must fight it," Kenyan President Daniel arap Moi said as he inspected the ruins.

Mombasa is a mostly Muslim city with links to the Arab world. Prominent Islamist Abubakar Awadh, an official of the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims, said: "If this was done to Israelis alone, it would be worthy cause". He said he was speaking in a personal capacity.

Israeli and Kenyan officials have been quick to blame Osama Bin Laden's Al-Qaeda network. But the White House said it was too soon to blame the group it accuses of mounting the September 11 attacks and the 1998 bombings of US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in which 224 people died, most of them Africans.

Australia alert: Australia received intelligence warnings two weeks ago of a threat in Mombasa, prompting it to urge its nationals not to go there.

But Australian foreign minister Alexander Downer said, Nov 29, his country "had no specific information about the timing, location or method of the possible attacks".

Mossad takes over probe: Hundreds of Israeli troops and Mossad secret service agents poured into Kenya, Nov 29, effectively taking control of the investigation into the suspected Al-Qaeda bomb and missile attacks in the resort city of Mombasa.

More than 300 heavily-armed soldiers, medical personnel and airmen flew in on five special flights, as Ariel Sharon, Israel's Prime Minister, promised to "hunt down" those responsible.

Kenya said, Nov 30, it had so far found no link between 12 people held over the attacks on Israelis in Mombasa and the Al-Qaeda network that some suspect was behind them, and two detainees were freed.

US officials said, Nov 29, the top suspect for the blast was the Somali-based group Al-Itihad al-Islamiya, known also as AIAI or the Islamic Union. They said it was prominent Islamist group in the Horn of Africa and had links with the Al-Qaeda group.

Three Israelis, including two children, and nine Kenyans, died in the attack.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, New Delhi, *Telegraph*, Calcutta and *Daily Telegraph*, London)

LIBERIA

a. US govt wants Bility released: The continued incarceration of journalist Hassan Bility, human rights advocate Sheikh Sackor and others has prompted the US government to call for their release.

The call was made, Nov 21, when U.S. Ambassador John W Blaney addressed a news conference at the US embassy office at Mamba Point.

The ambassador said his government was calling for the release of political and other prisoners including Hassan Bility, editor-in-chief of the independent Analyst Newspaper, *Humanist* executive director Sheikh Sackor and others who, he said, are being held without access to lawyers, the civil courts or independent observers.

More than a fortnight ago, President Charles Taylor pronounced that he would turn over certain individuals, including journalist Al-Hassan Bility, who along with others are being detained by the Liberian government, to the Islamic community.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Liberia, page 881:a]

MOZAMBIQUE

a. Minister calls for fight against corruption: Mozambique's minister of state administration Jose Chichava, Nov 4, demanded that all his staff dedicate themselves to the battle against corruption.

He was speaking in the tourist resort of Bilene, in the southern province of Gaza, at the opening of a session of his ministry's coordinating council, held under the theme: "Training and the transparency of administrative acts are fundamental steps in the fight against corruption".

In his brief opening speech Chichava demanded transparency, an end to unnecessary red tape, and a struggle against corruption from all the employees of his ministry.

The meeting will draw up a balance sheet of the first year of implementing the government's public sector reform. The aim is to create a professional, results-oriented civil service, and changing the attitudes towards the public of civil servants.

The report given to the meeting said that over the past year, there have been 13 cases involving disciplinary proceedings in the ministry. These resulted in the expulsion of three officials from the state apparatus, and the demotion of four others. Three people had their contracts rescinded, and one offender was fined.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

NIGERIA

a. Death toll in riots crosses 200: The death toll in rioting between Muslims and Christians in the northern Nigerian city of Kaduna jumped to more than 200, a senior Red Cross official said, Nov 24.

The violence began after a 'blasphemous' newspaper article.

Emmanuel Ijewere, president of the Nigerian Red Cross, said the relief organisation had by Nov 23 counted 215 bodies on the

streets and in mortuaries throughout the city. Previous estimates had 100 people killed.

An unknown number of others killed in the riots were believed to have been buried individually by family members, Ijewere said. By Nov 24, a tense calm was reported in Kaduna, a Muslim-dominated city with a large Christian minority.

Families timidly ventured out of their homes to attend church services and replenish food stocks with what they could find in local markets, where a few meat and vegetable stalls reopened.

The fighting, which began, Nov 20, and continued until Nov 23, injured about 500 people and left 4,500 homeless, he said.

At least 22 churches and eight mosques were destroyed in the mayhem, said Shehu Sani of the Kaduna-based Civil Rights Congress. Ten hotels were also badly damaged, he said, whose group estimated "well over 200 people" had been killed.

One policeman and one soldier were arrested on allegations of dragging 15 Muslim men out of their homes and summarily executing them, he said.

The victims' bodies were then thrown into a river, he said.

Allegations the people and soldiers gunned down more than a dozen other civilians without provocation have also been filed with the authorities, Sani added.

A police spokesman could not immediately confirm the reports.

Ethnic and religious fighting is common in Nigeria, where thousands have been killed in clashes since civilian government replaced military rule in 1999.

Much of the violence, Nov 22, and Nov 23 was by Christians retaliating against Muslim neighbourhoods, Ijewere said.

"Some Christians feel especially bitter, because with the exit of Miss World, they have lost a symbolic battle while the Muslims have won," he said. "Our greatest fear is that it could spread to other cities now".

Sporadic gunshots and shouting could be heard, Nov 22, by residents who still cowered inside their homes. Muslim mobs have stabbed, bludgeoned or burned bystanders to death, torched churches and cars, and rampaged through streets.

On Nov 24 morning, plumes of black smoke rose above the city from makeshift barricades lit by rioters. Authorities extended a curfew to 24 hours a day, although large number of people were ignoring the order.

In Ungwa-Rome and Larayi—neighbourhoods dominated by the city's Christian minority—witnesses said youths smashed windows and set fires in mosques. Rioting was also reported in Kabala Costain, one of the predominantly Muslim cosmopolitan city of several million people.

Fearful residents of all faiths were rushing into police stations and military facilities for protection.

The latest protests began, Nov 20, with the burning of an office of *This Day* newspaper in Kaduna after the Lagos-based daily published an article questioning Muslim groups that have condemned the Miss World pageant. Muslim groups say the pageant to be held on Dec 7 in the capital, Abuja, promotes sexual promiscuity and indecency.

Large contingents of security forces also patrolled other major cities, Nov 22, including the northern trading hub of Kano, where Muslim women chanting "Allahu Akhbar," held a peaceful demonstration calling for the cancellation of the pageant.

Miss World organisers insist contestants have respected Muslim values by dressing conservatively. Islamic fundamentalist groups had for months warned of protests against the Miss World pageant, prompting organizers to postpone the finale until after the Islamic holy month of Ramadan.

The pageant has also drawn protests from other parts of the world. Contestants from five countries—Costa Rica, Denmark, Switzerland, South Africa and Panama—are boycotting the event because Islamic courts in Nigeria have sentenced several women to death by stoning for conceiving babies outside wedlock.

Miss World venue shifts to London: Amid riots and religious protests, organisers of Miss World 2002 finally announced that they were moving the pageant to London from Nigeria.

Hours before the announcement, a spokesperson for the organisers, Miss World Organisation and Silver Bird Production Ltd, said some of the 92 contestants and their families were becoming troubled by the controversy and the violence.

"Some of them (contestants) have had second thoughts, but we've been able to change their minds," she said, Nov 23.

Editor arrested over article: Nigeria's secret police have arrested a newspaper editor blamed for fomenting riots over the Miss World contest by publishing an allegedly blasphemous article.

This Day published an article on November 16 which said Prophet Mohammed would probably have married one of the contestants in the beauty pageant, which had been scheduled to take place in the capital Abuja on December 7. The article sparked off three days of rioting in the mainly Muslim northern city of Kaduna in which over 200 people were killed.

This Day, which has apologised for the article, said the editor, Simon Kolawole, was arrested, Nov 22, and has not been seen since.

Fatwa against author: A mainly Muslim state in northern Nigeria has pronounced a 'fatwa' urging believers to kill the author of the article on the Miss World pageant which was seen as insulting to Prophet Mohammed, a state spokesman said, Nov 26.

An official said that the fatwa—an Islamic religious decree—had been confirmed against the fashion writer Isioma Daniel, whose article sparked three days of bloody sectarian riots.

"The State government did not on its own pass the fatwa," he said.

"It's a fact that Islam prescribes the death penalty on anybody, no matter his faith, who insults the Prophet.

Meanwhile, Jang Yu-kyong, 19, South Korean contestant to the Miss World beauty pageant said she withdrew from the contest.

"I have decided to withdraw from the London contest because I could not participate with a smiling face after witnessing a crisis that left hundreds dead," Ms Jiang told reporters.

Ignore fatwa, says Islamic body: Nigeria's supreme Islamic body said, Nov 28, Muslims should ignore a fatwa issued by a northern state calling for the death of a journalist whose article on the Miss World pageant sparked bloody riots.

The statement by a Jama'atu Nasril Islam was circulated as President Olusegun Obasanjo faced angry church leaders in the riot-torn city of Kaduna who said most of the more than 200 dead in the riots were Christians.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, Madras, *Deccan Herald*, Bangalore, *Telegraph*, Calcutta and *Statesman*, Calcutta)

[Background Info. Nigeria, page 895:a]

RWANDA

a. Former governor of Kigali pleads not guilty: Former governor of Kigali, Col Tharcisse Renzaho, Nov 21, pleaded not guilty to charges of genocide and crimes against humanity before the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR).

Renzaho, 58, was arrested in the Democratic Republic of Congo in September. He has since been in provisional detention at the United Nations Detention Facility (UNDF) in Arusha, Tanzania, pending the drafting of his indictment.

He was considered to be one of the most senior genocide suspects in the custody of the tribunal. He is charged with three counts of genocide, complicity in genocide and murder as a crime against humanity. The crimes were allegedly committed in Rwanda during the 1994 genocide. An estimated one million ethnic Tutsis and moderate Hutus were killed in the genocide, according to an official census by the government of Rwanda.

"I plead not guilty", the clean-shaven Renzaho responded in French to each of the counts in the indictment. "In my life, I have never harboured any intention to commit crimes as alleged in the indictment", he said before entering the plea for the first count.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Rwanda, page 896:a]

SIERRA LEONE

a. Campaign on violence against women launched: A 16-day campaign on violence against women was launched, Nov 25, in the Sierra Leonean capital, Freetown, by the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL).

Explaining the importance of the period chosen for the campaign, UNAMSIL's Patrice Vahard told journalists, Nov 23, that the dates linked the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, which fell on November 25, and the International Human Rights Day, commemorated on December 10, a UNAMSIL statement said.

"Radio UNAMSIL will be hosting two call-in radio programmes, one on rural and disabled women to give them the possibility of echoing their concern about gender-based violence [and] the other on uprooted women," Vahard said.

Other activities were also planned, he noted. Vahard said the campaign targeted people of both sexes from all social strata, in towns and the countryside.

"Gender violence unfortunately involves men and women, and largely is perpetrated by men," he noted, adding that it was a development issue that should concern everybody.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SOUTH AFRICA

a. More tourist attack suspects nabbed: Irate Mpumalanga residents have helped local police and army commandos crack a rural crime syndicate charged with murdering at least one tourist and robbing scores along the border with the Kruger National Park (KNP), it was reported, Nov 29.

Two of the gang's alleged triggermen were arrested by local residents and volunteer army commandos after a botched farm attack, and Nov 28, helped police recover loads of valuables stolen from tourists.

The gang, including the two Zimbabwean gunmen, specialised in hitting foreign backpackers staying at rustic bush lodges surrounding the safari town of Hazyview, said police spokesperson Captain Thabisile Gama.

The most recent victim, South African tourist Geoffrey Alan Dex (55), died when gangsters shot him three times in the chest during a hold-up at Umbhaba Lodge.

Swiss and British tourists were assaulted during earlier attacks on the nearby Safari Lodge, Kruger Park Backpackers, and Numbi Hotel.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. South Africa, page 898:c]

SWAZILAND

a. Rule by royal decree challenged: A new ruling by Swaziland's Court of Appeals has challenged King Mswati III's right to ignore parliament and rule by decree, presenting a fresh test for the government's commitment to the rule of law, it was reported, Nov 21.

In a ruling, the appeals court, consisting of eight justices on loan from South Africa, found that Mswati's father, King Sobhuza, erred when he gave himself and future Swazi kings the power to rule by decree. Sobhuza did so via his first decree in 1980.

The court found a king could decree laws only if mandated to do so by a national constitution. Sobhuza overturned Swaziland's first constitution in 1973, when he gave the monarchy incontestable governing powers.

"That a king's decree can only be made once a new constitution is in place remains an essential requirement," Judge President Charles Leon wrote in a 25-page ruling.

The appeals court said they would invalidate all royal decrees brought to them on an individual basis.

"This puts us back at square one, because the ruling was made specific to King Mswati's decree No. 3 of 2001, which was put in place to nullify an earlier decree that the international community condemned as dictatorial," a western envoy said.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Swaziland, page 899:a]

TANZANIA

a. SAA, Air Tanzania conclude partnership deal: SA Airways (SAA) and Air Tanzania signed a deal, Dec 2, whereby the South African national carrier will acquire a 49 per cent stake in the East African airline.

The signing ceremony was attended by officials from the Tanzanian and South African governments. Both governments hold the majority stake in their respective airlines.

Of the US\$20 million SAA paid, US\$10-million would cover the cost of acquiring the 49 per cent stake while a further US\$10 million would be used to recapitalise the new company.

SAA CEO Andre Viljoen told those attending the ceremony in Tanzania that the partnership offered potential for the growth of both parties.

"I would like to welcome Air Tanzania to the SAA family. This partnership does not only offer opportunities for growth, but also for establishing a strong and reliable presence in East Africa.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

UGANDA

a. Uganda, China sign new pact: The governments of Uganda and China, Nov 28, signed an agreement establishing political consultation mechanisms between them.

The agreement was signed by the minister for presidency, Gilbert Bukenya, and China's vice-foreign minister Yang Wenchang after a closed meeting at the Nile Hotel in Kampala.

It provides a framework under which the two countries can undertake political consultations on bilateral and multilateral interests.

Wenchang told journalists that China was setting up an exclusive fund for Africa to help African countries in capacity building, especially in agriculture and technology development.

He also said Chinese businessmen would soon establish a textile mill in Uganda.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

ZAMBIA

a. Sports minister Mumba dismissed: President Levy Mwanawasa has dismissed youth, sports and child development minister Levison Mumba.

Special assistant for press and public relations Arthur Yoyo said in a statement, Nov 27, Mumba had been replaced by Bwacha MP Gladys Nyirongo.

Earlier women led by Ireen Chisala met President Mwanawasa and presented a resolution calling for the expulsion of Mumba from the party.

Mwanawasa said he was disappointed with Mumba's conduct but said only the national executive committee (NEC) had powers to take action against a party member.

When contacted for comment, Mumba said he would not resign from MMD or relinquish his position as member of Parliament for Msanzala.

b. Parliament passes AIDS Bill: The Zambian parliament has passed an AIDS Bill which establishes a national council and secretariat to coordinate the previously fragmented fight against the epidemic.

"We did not have a single coordinated body that could marshal effectively the responses being initiated by the various actors. It is necessary that all communities throughout the country be mobilised in a collaborative manner to take part in the fight against HIV/AIDS/STI and TB [sexually transmitted infections and tuberculosis] which are all inter-related," health minister Brian Chituwo said while presenting the Bill to parliament.

The focus of the council and its secretariat would be to advise, evaluate, identify gaps, mobilise resources, initiate activities and

produce guidelines on how HIV/AIDS, STI and TB infections can be curbed. The council would be composed of members from the medical profession, government, people living with AIDS (PWAs), civil society and religious bodies.

While there were cheers over the adoption of the Bill, there was also some disquiet over perceived "gaps" in the government's strategy to tackle the epidemic in a country where 21.5 per cent of adults are HIV positive.

(SOURCE: *Post*, Lusaka)

ZIMBABWE

a. President extends commanders' terms: President Robert Mugabe has extended the terms of three top army commanders for a further period of one year.

According to a gazette released, Nov 29, General Vitalis Zvinavashe and Lt Gen Constantine Chiwenga were both appointed as commander of the Defence Forces and commander of the Zimbabwe National Army respectively, for a further period of one year with effect from July 1, 2002.

The third member of the command triumvirate, Air Marshal Perence Shiri was appointed commander of the Air Force of Zimbabwe for a further one year with effect from September 1.

The appointments were made in terms of subsection (4) of section 96 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe.

Gen Zvinavashe was appointed the first commander of the defence forces in July 1994 after the introduction of a new defence structure, which saw the force being divided into two branches - the ZNA and AFZ with their commanders reporting to him.

Air Marshal Shiri was first appointed commander of the Air Force of Zimbabwe in September 1992 following the retirement of Air Chief Marshal Josiah Tungamirai in 1992.

Lt General Chiwenga was also appointed at the same time following the retirement of Gen Solomon Mujuru.

The terms of the triumvirate were extended several times by President Mugabe.

b. Famine imminent, says WFP: The World Food Programme (WFP) warned, Nov 28, that the humanitarian crisis in Zimbabwe has deteriorated to the point where "we are very close to famine" among already weakened households.

WFP had aimed to feed three million vulnerable people in November, but does not have the food available to reach that target. It will now have to prioritise who can be fed.

"In November we'll focus on the most vulnerable of the most vulnerables, it's a target population that already doesn't have any other source of food except WFP ... We are very, very close to famine here," WFP deputy director Gawaher Atif said.

The signs of extreme need are already evident. Wild foods, some poisonous without careful preparation, are being consumed. In food distribution queues, people are scooping up spilled maize kernels.

School children are dropping out of class to find casual labour, levels of malnutrition are worsening, and hunger-related diseases are becoming more frequent, WFP said in a statement. Overall, the agency faces a shortfall of 200,000 mt between now and March 2003.

Although WFP's emergency operation has been 60 per cent funded, it takes two to three months for those pledges to be translated into food on lorries bound for hungry communities.

c. Veteran township pop artiste Mutuma dead: Veteran township pop artiste and leader of Sisonke Jonah Mutuma died, Nov 17, just a few days after he was admitted in a Bulawayo hospital.

His brother Sam said Mutuma, a voice from the past, had not been feeling well of late and had been taken to his hometown of Bulawayo where he died.

Mutuma will be remembered as one of the few musicians that played with the 70s Bulawayo sensation Wells Fargo that was based at the Happy Valley Hotel.

It was at that hotel where Mutuma, as a young boy from Nguboyenja in Mzilikazi suburb, peeped his way into the band which later groomed him to be the star he became.

He played with people like the jazz maestro Louis Mhlanga and was also a member of the Pied Pipers band that had the all time hit Ruva Rangu.

During his days with the Pied Pipers Mutuma contributed to Reggae Sounds of Africa, perhaps one of the best reggae albums to be made locally.

While Mutuma might have been playing around the clubs in town and not really seen at live gigs in stadiums or large halls, he was a strong voice who commanded respect.

He wowed the crowds with his hoarse voice and one of his best songs was Ndinotenda that was written by Chirikure Chirikure.

Mutuma was single but he left behind Ratidzayi Rudo, his only child and daughter.

d. Tourist tormentor sentenced to 6 years: Stephen Marisa, who had terrorised tourists at the Great Zimbabwe area for the past three years, was, Oct 31, jailed for six years for stealing property worth over \$25 million from his victims.

Marisa, who is yet to appear in court again for stealing property worth nearly \$25 million from tourists, pleaded guilty and was convicted on 23 counts of housebreaking with intent to steal and theft.

Masvingo regional magistrate, Enias Magate, sentenced Marisa to seven-and-a-half years in jail. But he suspended one-and-a-half years of the sentence.

The court heard that during the period extending from December 1999 to 16 October 2002, Marisa proceeded to the Great Zimbabwe and the hotel and lodges around the area, where he stole foreign currency and other property from tourists.

(SOURCE: *Independent*, Harare and *Hindu*, Madras)

ANALYSIS-I

Fears of famine haunt Ethiopia

Ever since the summer rains failed, Bushta Abdi, headmaster of Gewane junior school, has seen the mounting horror of Ethiopia's famine reflected in his pupils' face.

"The first thing I noticed was they lost their concentration in class. Then I saw their bodies changing as they lost fat. And now the numbers in class are declining as the children are forced to leave". Abdi does not expect much by way of creature comforts for his 315 pupils.

There is no electricity or water, no lavatories, and no food to provide a school lunch. Yet by virtue of having a school to go to, Abdi's charges are, in Ethiopian terms, relatively privileged, so the teachers and pupils do not complain.

But the disaster that is playing itself out around Gewane town and throughout the Afar region is one challenge for which Abdi has no answer. In one class, 40 of the 110 pupils have simply disappeared as their parents take their chances and flee to the cities, knowing from their memories of past droughts of the horrors that lie ahead.

If this famine reaches the peak that sober and scientifically based predictions suggest many of the children who are left behind around Gewane will be dead within a year.

And, by wiping out Ethiopia's tentative efforts to educate its children, this famine is entrenching the relentless cycle of hunger and underdevelopment by throwing the consequences of this crisis forward into the next generation. We are conditioned by

haunting television images to see famine in terms of fly-blown faces and swollen bellies, but that stage has not yet been reached.

Ethiopian famines have their own awful rhythm: first the cattle die, then the goats, and then the people. The first stage has now been reached because the meher (main) rains of June to September failed, so there is no grass on the ground, and the cattle are dying in their hundreds of thousands.

FARM-Africa, one of the aid agencies active in this region, believes that one third of the cattle in Afar have already died, and that soon none will be left.

Afar is largely a pastoralist farming society in which the economy is based entirely on livestock. The pastoralists build up herds of cattle, move them around from season to season in search of pasture, then exchange them for grain to feed their families.

There are no banks, and virtually no cash economy to speak of, so cattle are not just a form of exchange, but also the only store of capital.

In Afar, a man's wealth is calculated by how many head of cattle he owns. Therefore, as the cattle die, the entire rural economy is destroyed. The local people have no way of feeding themselves other than to cadge sacks of maize from the relief agencies.

Husien Ibrahim, a local headman and agricultural commissioner for the Afar region, fears that this famine will be worse than the one of 1984-85. "The people are already eating just one meal a day from the aid food stores.

There is no fresh water to drink so the children are drinking from rivers and spreading diseases because that is where people

throw the dead cows". The local sense of despair is compounded, he explained, by the witch doctors' confident predictions, based on reading of the stars, that the next rains in March will also fail.

But even if the lighter spring rains bring limited relief next year, some 17-million Ethiopians in the affected areas are facing the terrible struggle of getting through the next four months of dry season with no prospect of rain.

In times of famine, it is often impossible to know precisely what has caused a child's death, because so many diseases are caused or made worse by malnutrition.

It is clear from talking to local medical personnel in the villages that children are already dying of diseases that they would survive in normal times.

FARM-Africa sends units of experts to set up camps for three months in villages and advise the communities on animal husbandry and disease prevention, but it is clear that the relatively small charity is overwhelmed by the scale of the crisis.

It has been working to improve the health of livestock, but is now planning to offer assistance in slaughtering animals effectively, rather than simply wait for them to die. At one settlement at Beida on the banks of the Awash river, the consequences of the drought were plain to see.

The clan leader, Aden Uda, used to be a rich man, but he has lost 93 of his 100 cattle and was clearly humiliated having to rely on supplies of international aid to feed himself and his family.

—*Telegraph*, London, reproduced in *Hindu*, Madras

ANALYSIS-II

South Africa's \$ 200m herbal remedies trade

On an unfinished freeway on ramp that juts out of the Durban skyline and into nowhere, people come searching for cures to an assortment of maladies. Loveness Bhengu, a 22-year old secretary, wants a special bark to unblock her sinuses.

Mashala Mkhiza needs some pineapple flowers to make a poultice for his teenage son's swollen arm. And Lewis Mkhezi is on a quest for the ultimate remedy: He is looking for the vendor who claims his potion of tree bark and hyena tails will cure AIDS.

In just a few years, the *muti*—or traditional medicine—market on Warwick Junction has exploded into an herbal superstore, providing tonics, hope and jobs for tens of thousands of South Africans.

The United Nations has cited the *muti* market as a successful example of small vendors playing a major role in urban renewal. The trade in bark, leaves and other exotic flora has boomed so much, in fact, that conservationists now fear it's threatening many plant species across southern Africa.

Only a few years ago, street vending was illegal in Durban. But city officials relaxed their rules after the unemployment rate soared past 30 per cent. *Muti* vendors popped up like mushrooms across this Indian Ocean port city of 4 million people.

About 80 per cent of South Africa's black population uses traditional medicine, according to Myles Mander, an economist

with the Institute of Natural Resources, a research group associated with the University of Natal.

The 100,000 traditional healers nationwide who dispense cures from medicinal plants make *muti* a \$200-million-a-year business, according to Mander.

Nowhere is the trade more vibrant than in KwaZulu-Natal province, where for centuries the Zulu people have relied on herbal remedies to soothe their colds, reduce fevers and treat their diseases.

Even as more people have moved to urban areas, tradition and a lack of affordable health care have sustained the *muti* trade.

About 30,000 jobs are created by the *muti* trade in KwaZulu-Natal, according to Mander, who has studied the business for the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation.

"This is how I feed my children and grandchildren", said Malamini Khumalo, a prominent vendor and traditional healer at the Warwick Junction market. Khumalo and others insist that their herbs and concoctions are effective. I've been to a hospital only three times: to have babies", she said. "The medicine is good enough for me".

As the *muti* market has become more popular, more people come seeking medicine for various ailments. A common complaint is HIV/AIDS.

Khumalo said she simply refers clients to the hospital. But not far from Khumalo's stall, Beaty Mkhize boasted that she has helped many AIDS patients with her special *ishongwe* medicine, a concoction of three barks.

"I have a little something", said Mkhize, pointing to her small mounds of green plants and dried tree barks. Raising a dried twig, she said matter-of-factly "This could really help people with indolence".

Studies have shown that at least one-third of 700 plant species traded in South Africa have some medicinal effects, according to Geoff Nichols, a horticultural consultant with the Durban local government. Some of the plants also boost the body's immune system, he said.

Some *muti* remedies for allergies and prostate cancer have been adapted by European and American drug companies, Mander and others say.

But Khumalo and other *muti* vendors are wary of Western biopirates", who they fear will steal their remedies, turn them

into pharmaceuticals and put traditional practitioners out of business.

While the *muti* boom has been good for the economy, some conservationists are concerned about its effect on the environment.

A few years ago, researchers observed that over-harvesting had led to the disappearance, in some areas, of several plant species, including Natal wild ginger and the pepper-bark tree, used to treat colds and allergies.

Muti dealers must now leave KwaZulu-Natal to forage in the forests of Zimbabwe, Swaziland and Mozambique for rare plant stocks.

As many species become scarce, conservationists are devising ways to conserve wild plant populations. Outlawing the indigenous medicine trade is impractical, Mander said, because replacing it would cost more than half of the \$370-million annual health budget of KwaZulu-Natal.

So scientists and *muti* dealers have been working on other approaches. Mander's colleagues at the University of Natal are compiling the first encyclopedia of medicinal plants traded in South Africa.

The book will be used by *muti* dealers, conservationists and hospital workers who often treat patients who ingest toxic plants, they say.

A team led by Nichols has been painting the bark of some trees to prevent plant gatherers from harvesting it. Nichols also has worked to establish the Silverglen Medicinal plant Nursery, a 2-acre plot on which horticulturists grow the top 20 plants traded at Durban's *muti* market.

Nichols often invites *muti* dealers to see how to grow their own medicinal plants rather than harvest them from the wild. Some traditional healers have grumbled that cultivated plants are less potent than their cousins in the wild, he said.

But many are supporting the conservation efforts, recognising they must protect their livelihoods and their traditions.

"Most realise that this is the way to go", Nichols said. "If we don't work together, we could lose a large part of our culture".

—Davan Maharaj in *World Report*, reproduced in *Deccan Herald*, Bangalore

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ANGOLA

a. Sanctions against UNITA lifted: The UN Security Council has lifted nine-year-old sanctions against Angola's UNITA movement, welcoming efforts by the government and the former rebel group in implementing a peace accord that ended the country's brutal civil war.

The 15-member council unanimously approved a resolution lifting the sanction, Dec 9, first imposed in 1993 in an effort to force the rebels to end fighting that began after Angola won independence from Portugal in 1975.

The sanctions included a ban on rebel diamond exports that were helping to finance the conflict and an arms and fuel embargo. A travel ban was lifted by the council in October. The resolution which was passed, Dec 9, also disbanded a commission set up to monitor the sanctions.

"Everybody agreed that war is over, the whole thing (UNITA) has disbanded, and it has become a political party," said Robert Skinner, a spokesman for the United States' UN mission.

In the resolution, the Security Council reaffirmed "its commitment to preserve the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Angola". It also welcomed steps taken by both sides to implement a UN-brokered peace agreement. Angola's civil war—Africa's longest-running conflict—ended in April with the signing of a ceasefire, shortly after the army killed the UNITA rebel leader, Jonas Savimbi.

[Background Info. Angola, page 889:a]

b. Nurses announce nation-wide strike: Angolan nurses are to go on a nation-wide strike at 2:00 pm, Dec 14, following government's failure to meet their demands.

The decision to go on strike came following a health ministry refusal to negotiate. However, special service units and work teams will be put in place to handle first aid, births, surgeries, emergency cases during the period of strike.

Salary increase, normalisation of service of unpaid nurses employed under public tenders and contracts are some of the workers' demands. They are also pressing for the payment of special subsidies and allowances.

c. Malaria kills 150 people at Ganda: Some 150 people have died of malaria over the last seven months at Santa-Ana resettlement camp in the coastal Benguela province, it was reported, Dec 12.

The Santa-Ana camp lies in Benguela's municipality of Ganda, which is about 200 kilometres from the provincial capital.

According to camp commander Col Germano Wilson, the situation could even have been worse had the local authorities not promptly intervened with the cooperation of the army and non-governmental organisations. Shortage of food and clothes, for instance, forced some ex-soldiers to leave the centre, searching for livelihood in neighbourhoods, he said.

(SOURCE: *Namibian*, Windhoek and *Hindu*, Madras)

BOTSWANA

a. Strike deals a blow to economy: A massive nation-wide wage strike lasting more than two weeks was suspended, Dec 3, following talks between union representatives and President Festus Mogae.

The strike had paralysed transport systems, cut medical care, shut down local council services and closed abattoirs nationwide. Botswana has in recent years been portrayed as an investor's paradise, politically stable, economically robust. But the strike showed that all is not well in Botswana.

That it was necessary for the President of the country to meet union representatives to resolve the issues in dispute points to the heart of the problem.

The Botswana Unified Local Government Services Authority (BULGSA), which represents the local council employees who downed tools, says that labour law prevents public service unions from negotiating salaries and working conditions with government. Instead, salary reviews are conducted at the whim of the state.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BURKINA FASO

a. Journalists' body deplors inaction on Zongo's murder: Reporters Without Borders, Dec 11, deplored the failure to solve the murder of Norbert Zongo, publisher of the weekly *L'Indpendant*.

Zongo was shot dead on a road in southern Burkina Faso on December 13, 1998. It accused the government of doing everything it could to avoid a trial. It said Burkina legal officials were doing nothing. The judge assigned to the case was not conducting any investigations and many people who had relevant evidence had not still been interviewed.

The press freedom organisation asked the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression, Ambeyi Ligabo, to visit the country as soon as possible and urged the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Sergio Vieira de Mello, to take up the case and demand that the Burkina

authorities organise a speedy trial. The people of Burkina no longer believe official assurances that things are "moving forward" in the case.

Their scepticism extends to President Blaise Campaore's remark recently. He insisted the country's judiciary was independent and said he had no power over the investigation or any professional relationship with the judges.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Burkina Faso, page 806:a]

BURUNDI

a. Tanzanian President optimistic about Burundi ceasefire accord: A ceasefire agreement was signed, Dec 3, between warring parties in Burundi.

The peace deal commits the government of President Pierre Buyoya and the rebel Forces for the Defence of Democracy (FDD) of Pierre Nkurunziza to stop fighting and to reach agreement on a transition and return to democracy in Burundi.

The truce was signed across the border in neighbouring Tanzania, in the town of Arusha, after months of horse-trading and negotiations and after 9 years of civil war in Burundi. It comes into force at the end of the month.

The Tanzanian leader attended the final stages of the negotiations in Arusha, along with President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa. The Ethiopian Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi, was also present.

They all left before the signing ceremony, but the South African deputy president, Jacob Zuma, chief negotiator in the Burundi peace talks, and Uganda's president Yoweri Museveni who chaired the summit on Burundi, were both there.

[Background Info. Burundi, page 901:a]

b. Amnesty International's drive to end child abuse: Amnesty International has launched a drive to end "serious human rights violations" in the treatment of detained children in Burundi, it was reported, Dec 5.

Highlighting the plight of eight detained children, the campaign urges people to write letters calling on the nation's President and his ministers of justice, defence, interior, and human rights to take "more robust steps" to end widespread torture and ill-treatment in detention centres.

In a document titled "Poverty, Isolation and Ill-treatment: Juvenile Justice in Burundi", Amnesty said children are arrested arbitrarily and detained illegally and for prolonged periods, given unfair trials and handed down disproportionate sentences.

"Children endure harsh, overcrowded and life-threatening conditions of detention," Amnesty said.

It added that the authorities had failed to provide educational or recreational programmes essential to the growth and development of children, "leaving children stifled".

In addition, it said, children were detained with adults, leaving them open to bullying and sexual abuse. Of a total prison

population of around 9,000, around 160 children under the age of 18 years were being held in Burundi's 11 prisons, Amnesty said. "The overwhelming majority are male," it said.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

a. Rebels call on Patasse to resign: Rebels in the Central African Republic (CAR) have joined forces in calling on President Ange-Felix Patasse to resign.

"We want President Patasse to understand that he can no longer rule the country," Jean-Paul Ngoupande, chairman of the opposition Parti de l'Union Nationale (PUN) and a former Prime Minister, told Radio France Internationale, Dec 11.

All the members of the opposition in exile, Gen Francois Bozize - the former chief of staff, who led the October 2002 coup attempt - and supporters of former President Andre Kolingba, who attempted a coup in May 2001, signed a joint communique in the French capital, Paris, recently, calling for Patasse's resignation.

The opposition within CAR, which was not associated with the Paris gathering, has abstained from offering its support.

Rebels release presidential spokesman unharmed: Rebels in the Central African Republic have released Prosper Ndouba, the presidential spokesman they captured just over a month ago, the local representative of the International Committee of Red Cross said, Dec 3.

"He was released yesterday (Dec 2) at 10:00 a.m. and we accompanied him home, where he is with his family," Peter Fluege, the ICRC official, said.

"I confirm that he came back accompanied by the ICRC," Christophe Ndouba, Prosper's younger brother, said in the capital, Bangui.

The rebels, loyal to the country's former armed forces chief of staff, Gen Francois Bozize, released Ndouba. A rebel spokesman, Parfait Mbaye, told Radio France Internationale, Dec 2, that Ndouba's release was obtained after incessant pleas by the ICRC, and village leaders at Paoua, 506 km north of Bangui, which is still under rebel control.

But analysts said the rebels' decision to release Ndouba was connected to a complaint filed in a French court recently by Ndouba's wife against Bozize, whom she accused of kidnapping her husband. As Ndouba is a French citizen and Bozize had been granted asylum in France, analysts said that the French judicial authorities would have pursued the case.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Central African, Republic, page 901:a]

CONGO

a. Two ICRC workers abducted: Two members of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) were abducted, Dec 4, by seven unidentified armed men in the Bouenza region of southern Republic of Congo. Dec 6

A statement released by the ICRC, Dec 5, said the two men—one French and one Congolese—were taken away as they were assessing the needs of displaced people in the area. They had travelled to several other villages situated to the southwest of the capital, Brazzaville, to meet people displaced by recent disturbances.

The ICRC said it had informed the country's military and civilian authorities of the abduction and remained in permanent contact with them with a view to resolving the crisis. It added that the organisation was "deeply concerned" about the fate of its two staff members and strongly condemned the act, which, it said "could only have negative consequences for humanitarian action in the country".

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

CONGO (DR)

a. Mayi-Mayi threatens to resume fighting: Militia groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), known as the Mayi-Mayi, have threatened to resume fighting if the text of a power-sharing agreement tabled by the mediation team in the South African capital, Pretoria, is adopted.

"We refuse to commit ourselves to the accord and we are going to resume hostilities if the other constituents adopt its text," Mahano Ge Mahano, a Mayi-Mayi representative said, Dec 12.

The UN special envoy to the DRC, Moustapha Niasse, presented a 20-page document titled "Global and inclusive accord on the transition period in the DRC" to the government, rebel groups, civil society and unarmed opposition, Dec 12. Civil society, the unarmed opposition and the Mouvement pour la Liberation du Congo, one of the country's main rebel groups, welcomed the text, which set out power-sharing arrangements at government, Senate and parliamentary levels.

The government and rebel the Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie (RCD-Goma) have demanded changes. "There are imbalances in fundamental areas, which are much more important for us than the division of posts. We absolutely have to amend the text to safeguard the sovereignty of our country.

b. Journalist freed, another held: Media watchdog Journaliste En Danger (JED) and Reporters Sans Frontieres (RSF) have hailed the release, Dec 3, of Delly Bonsange, editor of the *Alerte Plus* newspaper, but deplored the continuing imprisonment of his colleague, Raymond Kabala, it was reported, Dec 5.

Bonsange and Kabala, the director of *Alerte Plus*, were arrested in July for publishing a report that then-security minister Mwenze Kongolo had been poisoned. The following day, however, *Alerte Plus* published a corrigendum stating that the information was false, RSF reported.

"The sentence is excessive and is meant to curb the growth of the private media in the DRC and ensure that *Alerte Plus* is not published again," RSF secretary-general Robert Menard

said. RSF called for the sentence be quashed and for the two to be released immediately. In addition to being jailed, Bonsange and Kabala were ordered to pay Kongolo an estimated US \$300,000 in damages. The DRC government spokesman, Kikaya bin Karubi, said on September 10 that the sentence was just, and would discourage journalists from making irresponsible statements.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Congo (DRC), page 843:b]

EGYPT

a. Court orders retrial: Egypt's highest appeals court ordered a retrial of an Egyptian-American sociologist, Dec 3, overturning his conviction for tarnishing Egypt's image with his writings on democracy and human rights.

Saad Eddin Ibrahim's earlier conviction and seven-year sentence had been condemned as politically motivated by human rights groups around the world and follows longstanding criticism—even by friends like the United States—of restrictions on speech and democratic activity in Egypt.

The case also strained ties between Egypt and the United States. At least five judges from the seven-member appeals court will preside over the retrial set to start on January 7. It will be Ibrahim's third trial on the same charges.

b. Parliament member expelled: The Egyptian parliament expelled a member of the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood, Dec 15, claiming votes were miscounted in his Nile Delta constituency in the 2000 election.

Gamal Heshmat said he lost his seat on the recommendation of the parliament's constitutional committee which had received a challenge to that ballot count. Parliament is dominated by the President, Hosni Mubarak's National Democratic Party, but candidates running as independents but backed by the Muslim Brotherhood had won 17 seats in the 2000 vote, making them the largest opposition bloc in the 454-seat legislature.

Heshmat denied there was a significant error in the count, saying only 1,000 ballots were challenged and that he had won by 6,000 votes over his nearest rival. He also said there were nine other vote-count challenges, all from NDP members, but "mine was the only one to be presented to the Parliament" for action.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, Madras)

ETHIOPIA

a. Appeals for food aid: The Ethiopian Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi, has made an impassioned plea to donors to help feed 11.3 million people facing severe food shortages in this impoverished Horn of Africa nation.

Meles said thousands of deaths could be avoided if the rest of the world takes the scale of the mounting crisis seriously. "What we need are resources," said Meles, who discussed the crisis with the US President, George W Bush, in Washington,

Dec 5. "We have a good system, let's use it to deliver aid in time". The government estimates that a further three million people living a dirt-poor existence could also need food assistance unless the situation improves.

Ethiopia, which has a population of around 62 million, is one of the world's 10 poorest countries and is regularly beset by drought and serious food shortages.

Between 1984 and 1985, famine devastated the nation, and in 2000 an estimated 10 million people needed food aid.

Each year, some four million people in the country—where the average annual income is \$108—need food aid to survive, the government said.

The country is also still trying to overcome the effect of a 2-1/2 year border war with Eritrea which ended in December 2000. Both sides spent \$1 million a day on the conflict and each lost tens of thousands of lives.

Meles, who was speaking at the government-run Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission's emergency appeal, told diplomats and UN officials there was a "chronic, predictable underlying structural problem that needs to be addressed"

"Not after the emergency has passed, but in conjunction with addressing the emergency", he added.

"We need to develop strategies to fight poverty which is at the root of the problem".

Simon Mechale, head of the commission, said crop failure in 2002 had increased by 25 per cent compared to previous years.

He said millions of dollars in aid would be needed to prevent the crisis turning into a disaster.

"The problem has become a major challenge to the government and people of Ethiopia", he said.

"The government is seriously concerned that failure to quickly deliver and sustain it would cause the death and displacement of victims we have so far successfully prevented".

Sam Nyambi, UN representative in Ethiopia, said the magnitude of the crisis should not be underestimated.

The numbers in need could grow before the year is out, he told aid agencies.

Carol Bellamy, head of the UN Children's Fund, urged the government to do more to tackle the effects of recurrent drought and develop a longer-term strategy to combat the root causes of the food shortages.

Throughout Africa more than 30 million people are said to be in danger of severe malnutrition or starvation because of food shortage caused by drought, poor management and corruption.

[Background Info. Ethiopia, page 903:a]

b. 25 million euro loan: The European Investment Bank (EIB) is to release a total of 25 million euro loan to improve electricity supply in the country.

The loan agreement was signed between the Bank and the government, Dec 11.

Aimed at increasing access to electricity and improving the quality the loan is part of a total budget amounting to \$200

million, of which the World Bank (WB) is the lead financier, providing \$ 133 million on International Development Association (IDA) account, according to Eberhard Bomcke, EIB senior loan officer, Africa, Caribbean and Pacific department.

In an exclusive interview with *Addis Tribune*, Bomcke said that the loan was granted to the government for lending to the Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation (EEPCO) with an extended term of 15 years. The period is extendable to 17 years in case of delay in the implementation programme, including a five-year grace period.

The interest rate of the loan is 1%, enabling Ethiopia to benefit from debt relief and HIPC initiative. The loan is to be made by the government to the EEPCO at an interest rate of 6%. "The difference, 5%, will be used by the government to finance rural electrification programme," Bomcke said.

The bank was planning to finance the electric sector considering the poor status of the country's electricity distribution, according to Bomcke.

"It has suffered from inefficient maintenance in the past and is characterized by overload of network and relatively high level of system losses."

c. Ethiopian Airlines suspends flights to Tel Aviv: The Ethiopian Airlines (EAL) has suspended its flights to Tel Aviv, it was announced, Dec 3.

The decision by the Airlines came after Israeli authorities, Dec 1, diverted an Ethiopian airliner destined to Tel Aviv to a desert airport for what they said was a security check before it was allowed to land at the Tel Aviv Airport.

In a statement, EAL said it was "dismayed" by the action taken by the Israeli authorities, which had "caused undue stress and inconvenience to our passengers and crew and has also caused operational irregularities and unexpected additional costs."

The director of the Israeli Aviation Administration was quoted as saying that the plane was diverted because of "not good reports on security arrangement at Addis Ababa"

The Ethiopian Airlines reacted saying its flights are "operated in full respect of internationally agreed and accepted operation rules and safety and security standards."

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa and *Hindu*, Madras)

GUINEA BISSAU

a. Bissau needs 2.2m euros for elections: Guinea Bissau needs 2.2 million euros to conduct the poll, a top electoral official said.

"If the international community rapidly puts this sum at the disposal of the ministry of internal administration, we'll be able to hold the election in February," the executive secretary of the National Electoral Commission (CNE), Filomeno Lobo de Pina said, Dec 1.

He said an electoral data bank had already been created in the country, and "we need just to carry out a complementary census of about 40,000 voters" to add to the list of 508 000 registered in 1999. A parliamentary election had not been due

until the end of 2003, but President Koumba Yala on November 15 dismissed a government which he accused of incompetence and dissolved the National Assembly, citing "a very serious economic crisis".

Since then, a transitional government, pending the election and dominated by members of Yala's ruling Social Renovation Party (PRS), has been formed by a new Prime Minister, Pedro Pires.

The PRS does not have a majority in the outgoing parliament, which was elected in 1999. Under the constitution, a parliamentary election should be held within 90 days of the dissolution of the National Assembly.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Guinea Bissau, page 904:a]

IVORY COAST

a. Troops gun down 120 civilians: Government soldiers killed more than 120 civilians, most of them workers from neighbouring African nations, in an attack on a village in central Ivory Coast.

The alleged massacre would be the worst-known attack on civilians in the nearly 3-month-old war in the once-prosperous west African nation, which has been split three ways into rebel-and government-held zones.

At Monoko-Zohi village, Dec 7, an Associated Press reporter saw rotting limbs sticking out of a shallow grave.

The village is in rebel territory 120 kilometres northwest of the government-held town of Daloa. It stood deserted of all but men, Dec 7, its buildings looted and burned.

Youth called to arms as rebels advance: Rebels pressed deeper into Ivory Coast's western cocoa growing region as the embattled government urged young men to mobilize en masse to fight an increasingly messy civil war, it was reported, Dec 8.

The emergence of new rebel factions in the west of the world's largest cocoa producer has aggravated the creeping chaos in a country of 16 million that was already split in two after a failed coup in mid-September.

Hundreds died in four weeks of fighting after the attempted putsch. Hundreds more were killed in battles over the past week between rebels and loyalist troops backed by mercenaries. Soldiers from former colonial power France said western factions had advanced 120 km east from the Liberian border.

b. Rebels condemn new proposals: The rebel MPCl has condemned the new set of draft proposals which seek to implicate the major political parties in the renewed search for a political settlement in Ivory Coast to the mutual exclusion of the rebels and accused the ECOWAS Mediation Team (EMT) of doing all it can to keep President Gbagbo in power.

A statement issued in Lome, Dec 11, stressed that even though the rebel movement was both military and political in its composition, the EMT had adopted a new strategy in the

negotiations which seeks to isolate the MPCl from the negotiations taking place in Abidjan for a political settlement.

The rebels accused the EMT of seeking to maintain Laurent Gbagbo in power at all costs, in spite of the several crimes he committed against the Ivorian people.

The statement accused the mediation team of being partial in adopting a new procedure that favours Gbagbo by creating the wrong impression that any failure at the Lome talks should be laid squarely at the doorsteps of the MPCl rebels.

The rebels alleged that the mediation team has made draft peace proposals which re-echo the same proposals contained in a document prepared by Laurent Gbagbo titled "Declaration by Ivorian Political Parties" whose aim is to isolate the MPCl and pitch the rebels against the Ivorian major political groups.

"The subtle aim of the EMT is clear," says the rebel statement, "to ensure our isolation and range us against the major political parties as the root cause of the failure for the talks."

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Ivory Coast, page 880:a]

KENYA

a. Reward offered for arrest of terrorist suspects: Kenyan police, Dec 9, announced a US \$6,000 reward for information leading to the arrest of either of two men suspected of carrying out the failed missile attack on an Israeli airliner in Mombasa.

Although the two suspects have not been named, police were able to release computer-generated images of the men, believed to be in their thirties, the BBC reported.

The announcement comes 11 days after 16 people were killed in a suicide bomb attack on an Israeli-owned hotel near the Kenyan port city of Mombasa.

The Kenyan police's suspects are thought to be responsible for a near simultaneous missile attack on an Israeli-operated charter plane at Mombasa airport, which narrowly missed its target.

Kenyan President Daniel arap Moi, along with Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, met US President George W. Bush in Washington, Dec 5, and discussed cooperation in efforts to tackle terrorism in East Africa and the Horn of Africa.

Bush met the two leaders at the White House for about an hour, during which the men discussed cooperation in the war against terrorism, regional issues involving security in the Horn of Africa, the current food crisis in the region, and the HIV/AIDS crisis in Africa, the White House spokesman, Ari Fleischer, told journalists in Washington.

[Background Info. Kenya, page 905:a]

b. Shah Munge in court over NSE ban: Stock Broker Shah Munge and Partners, Dec 10, took its case to the High Court challenging its suspension from trading in shares at the Nairobi Stock Exchange.

The firm moved the court by way of appeal following the dismissal in November by the Capital Markets Appeals Tribunal of its bid to stop sanctions against it by the Capital Markets Authority (CMA).

Lawyer Mutula Kilonzo for Shah Munge filed a 15-ground memorandum of appeal questioning the assertion by the tribunal that it had no jurisdiction to lift the ban.

Shah Munge was suspended for one month starting October 17 over its alleged involvement in the controversial transfer of Sh256 million from the National Social Security Fund account at National Bank of Kenya (NBK) to Euro Bank.

This in effect blocked the oldest firm from trading in shares and fixed income securities at NSE during the period. In addition, CMA ordered Shah Munge to pay a penalty of Sh1.5 million and banned its directors from serving as licencees of the market regulator or any listed company for one year.

Meanwhile, the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) has alleged a stockbroker unlawfully converted to personal use over Sh125 million belonging to it, adds Nyakundi Nyamboga.

In an amended plaint filed in court, Dec 10, NSSF claimed Shah Munge and Partners Limited, unlawfully converted and utilised Sh125,079,699.96 out of Sh251,505,500 held at Euro bank. The alleged unauthorised conversion took place on July 16, 2002

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

LIBERIA

a. Jailed editor Hassan Bility released: Liberian authorities have released journalist Hassan Bility, whom authorities had held incommunicado since June 24 as a "prisoner of war", it was reported, Dec 9.

According to news reports, Bility, editor of the independent weekly *The Analyst*, was released without being charged or tried. He left the country for an undisclosed location.

On December 1, the Liberian government issued a statement saying that Bility and his colleagues would be released if the US embassy agreed to take them out of the country.

The BBC quoted Liberia's information minister Reginald Goodridge as saying that the government wanted to make sure Bility left the country because he was "a terrorist involved in an Islamic fundamentalist war," and that the Liberian people were angry at what he and his conspirators had done.

Bility—whose publication has been a regular target of official harassment in recent years—and two associates, Ansumana Kamara and Mohammed Kamara, were accused of colluding with the rebel Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD).

The LURD has been waging an armed struggle along Liberia's border with Guinea in a bid to topple the government of President Charles Taylor.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Liberia, page 905:a]

MALAGASY

a. Ravalomanana set to win in legislative elections: Malagasy goes to the polls on December 15, almost a year after the disputed presidential elections which plunged the island into a violent power struggle.

The much-anticipated legislative elections are expected to legitimise Marc Ravalomanana's presidency and pave the way for further economic reconstruction. The election is in line with demands by the international community and the African Union (AU) that fresh polls be held before the end of 2002.

This was part of a set of resolutions to defuse the stand-off between ex-President Didier Ratsiraka, who refused to accept his election defeat by Ravalomanana, who eventually declared himself President—a move endorsed by the country's highest court. Although 40 parties are vying for 160 seats in the National Assembly, analysts predict the elections would probably develop into a power struggle between Ravalomanana's newly founded party Tiako i Madagasikara (I love Madagascar), and the traditional ruling Arema party.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Malagasy, page 870:a]

MAURITANIA

a. Slavery persists, says Amnesty report: An Amnesty International report says it has gathered sufficient information to support the conclusion that in Mauritania, despite legal abolition of slavery in 1981, extensive human rights abuses connected to slavery are committed with impunity.

The report said although the Government of Mauritania has not itself seen fit to elaborate on its own position, "it is clear that government initiatives to eradicate slavery and discrimination are woefully inadequate, it was reported, Dec 11.

"Slavery in all its forms is a gross abuse of fundamental human rights and is prohibited by international law of human rights in all circumstances. Slavery, the report said, is a grave abuse of the right to physical and mental integrity and a grave abuse of the right to be free from discrimination".

Amnesty's report aims to explore the extensive human rights concerns in Mauritania which arise from slavery, including the closely related area of discrimination on the basis of social status.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MOZAMBIQUE

a. Security to witnesses in Cardoso murder case: Augusto Paulino, the judge in the Carlos Cardoso murder trial, Dec 9, announced changes in procedure to safeguard witnesses, following the weekend threats against wealthy businesswoman Candida Cossa.

The police, Dec 7, detained two men who were hanging around Cossa's home, one of whom had tried insistently to speak

to her. The man, Ramalho Domingos ("Travassos") tried to enter the house, saying he wanted to provide Cossa with "moral support". But the security guard on the door became suspicious and called the police. The second man, Jorge Mafawa, was waiting outside in a parked car.

The police found that Travassos was carrying newspaper cuttings on the trial, and scraps of handwritten paper, one containing Cossa's address, and others containing details of the cheques signed by Nyimpine Chissano, the oldest son of President Joaquim Chissano, which have become central to the trial. Candida Cossa also received threatening phone calls, Dec 6 and Dec 7, warning her to say nothing more about the cheques. She received three such calls, Dec 6, and five Dec 7.

The police also presented to reporters a man detained on suspicion of preparing an attack against the home of judge Paulino.

[Background Info. Mozambique, page 895:a]

b. Mega park launched: The world's largest game park was launched, Dec 9, after leaders of Zimbabwe, Mozambique and South Africa signed a treaty.

Presidents Mugabe, Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique and Thabo Mbeki of South Africa gave their assent to the park, which spans over the borders of the three countries.

The 95,000-square-kilometre park links Gonarezhou National Park in Zimbabwe, Limpopo National Park in Mozambique and Kruger National Park in South Africa. Speaking at the signing ceremony in the Mozambican resort of Xai Xai, 200 km north of Maputo, President Mugabe said the park demonstrated regional unity and should benefit people of the three countries.

"Today's event serves to demonstrate that that which unites us is greater than that which seeks to divide us. It reminds us also that we are one people, with a shared history and a shared destiny. It is to our people, therefore, that this mega park should be dedicated," Mugabe said.

Conservation efforts that failed to involve the local communities were bound to fail, he said, calling on those implementing the park to recognise the crucial factor.

"To this end, conservation must bring tangible rewards to the millions of our people who live and will live next to this tri-national park.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

NIGERIA

a. Obasanjo signs money laundering Bill into law: President Olusegun Obasanjo has signed into law three new Bills passed, Dec 14, and Dec 11, by the Senate and House of Representatives respectively.

They are Money Laundering Act (Amendment) Bill 2002, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (Establishment) Bill 2002, and Banks and Other Financial Institutions (Amendment) Bill 2002.

A presidential aide, Musa Aduwak, said, Dec 14, in a four-paragraph statement, that a copy of the new Act, as amended, "has been transmitted by the principal secretary to the President, Stephen Oronsanjo, to the chairman, financial Action Task Force, Middle East and Africa Review Group," as a deliberate step to beat the December 15 deadline stipulated by the international task force on financial crimes.

The Bills were passed by the National Assembly to accommodate the recommendations of President Olusegun Obasanjo, as contained in a letter he sent earlier to the leadership of both arms of the legislature. Consequently, the Senate, like its House of Representatives counterparts, called off its break for an emergency session to concur the House amendments. The House had earlier reconvened, Dec 11, to amend the three Bills on financial crimes and money laundering.

President Obasanjo had in a letter dated December 6 to the Senate President, Anyim Pius Anyim and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Hon. Ghali Na'Abba raised three fundamental objections in the Money Laundering Act (Amendment) Bill 2002 passed by the National Assembly.

b. Women's forum hears widow's horror tale: A Nigerian widow testified at a forum on violence against women about how her husband's family attacked her with acid for not bearing him a male child and dispossessed her of their common property after his death.

The forum, held in the town of Enugu, was part of a 16-day-long programme on violence against women in Nigeria. One of the organizers was the Women's Aid Collective, a non-governmental organization, it was reported, Oct 11.

The widow, Stella Ejeh, told how she and her seven year-old daughter was ejected from her matrimonial home in Onitsha, Anambra state, southeast Nigeria, five months ago, and how her in-laws also seized her husband's business after his death in 1997.

Her testimony represents the common Africa-wide culture that dispossesses women when their husbands die. In some parts of Africa, widows are forced to marry the husband's brother for survival. If there is any wealth, it is usually confiscated by the husband's family immediately.

Ejeh described how she was tricked to the home town of her in-laws, Oraukwu, in Anambra state, where one of her late husband's brothers bathed her and her daughter with a corrosive liquid, which she suspected to be an acid. She said she reported the attack to police in Onitsha, and later in Lagos, but no action was taken against the culprits.

The information officer, Nkechi Iiochi, said Ejeh's case highlighted the difficulties of protecting women from violence, which she said was increasing every day. The aim of the violence, she said, was to seize the man's wealth, especially if he died without a will.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi and *Statesman*, Calcutta)

[Background Info. Nigeria, page 906:a]

RWANDA

a. Military Trial adjourned: Judges at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), Dec 5, adjourned the so-called "Military Trial," for four defendants indefinitely, cutting short the testimony of the second prosecution witness.

Announcing the adjournment, Judge Lloyd Williams (presiding) told the parties that they would be informed of the trial's resumption date "in due course."

The adjournment came after three defence attorneys completed their cross-examination of the witness, identified only as "ZF." The fourth attorney will cross-examine ZF when the trial resumes. The first prosecution witness was Alison Des Forges, a human rights activist, who testified as an expert. Des Forges concluded her testimony on November 26.

The trial is for four former senior Rwandan military officers: Col Theoneste Bagosora, 61; Col. Anatole Nsengiyumva, 52; Brig-Gen Gratien Kabiligi, 51; and Maj Aloys Ntabakuze, 48. All four have denied charges of genocide and crimes against humanity.

Jean Degli of Togo/France, lead counsel for Kabiligi, Dec 5, questioned ZF's allegation that four Rwandan associations – the Zero Network, the Amasasu, the Alliance and the Abakozzi – were clandestine organizations formed to undertake anti-Tutsi activities. The witness has linked the four defendants to these organizations.

[Background Info. Rwanda, page 907:a]

b. High turnout as Gacaca courts open nationwide: One week after the opening of the semi-traditional Gacaca courts across the whole of Rwanda, the authorities said, Dec 14, that there had been a generally high turnout for the hearings.

"The turnout was very good. We are impressed", Charles Kayitana, the director of communication in the Gacaca department of the Rwanda Supreme Court, which supervises the Gacaca courts, said.

Gacaca courts started operating in June 2002, with 80 pilot Gacaca courts. An evaluation by the Gacaca department four months later concluded that the pilot Gacacas had been a success. Some 600 courts opened recently in what has been described as the "wholesale opening" of the courts. The special courts were created to speed up the trials of over 100,000 genocide suspects languishing in Rwandan prisons. Some of them have been in detention without trial for over seven years.

"The only limitation now is the logistics. We would otherwise have opened all the courts", Kayitana added. An estimated 10,000 courts are expected to be set up.

"It's now up to us", Methode Hatangimana, a resident of Gisozi sector on the outskirts of Kigali city said shortly after the start of Gacaca hearings in his cellule (a Rwandan administrative area).

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SIERRA LEONE

a. Chief prosecutor clarifies roles of Special Court, TRC: The chief prosecutor of the upcoming Special War Crimes Court for Sierra Leone, David Crane, Dec 10, clarified the roles and objectives of the court and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

In a speech in Freetown, Crane said the court and the TRC would operate independently, but both would work towards one ultimate goal—respect for human rights and accountability for those who committed abuse during the country's civil war.

Crane attempted to allay the fears of those who feared that testimonies given before the TRC would be used to prosecute them before the Special Court. He said TRC testimonies will not be used by the court. While the TRC will function more as a public forum for people to tell their stories and express their grievances without power to punish, the Special Court will run as a tribunal that will seek to punish those most responsible for violations of international human rights during the civil war.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Sierra Leone, page 860:a]

SOMALIA

a. Mogadishu ceasefire declaration signed: Somalia's Transitional National Government (TNG) and five Mogadishu-based factions have signed a joint ceasefire declaration committing themselves to ending violence in the Somali capital.

The breakthrough came, Dec 2, as the Somali peace talks, underway in the Kenyan town of Eldoret, entered a crucial second phase which could lead to an all-inclusive government.

Under the declaration, the sides agreed "to cease all kinds of hostilities now and in the future". They also committed themselves to "fighting bandits and armed militias who have been killing and abducting innocent people". They agreed to resolve existing political differences "through dialogue and goodwill".

Furthermore, the Somali leaders condemned "in the strongest terms possible all forms of terrorism" and expressed shock and sadness over the terrorist acts in Mombasa, Kenya, the declaration said. A Somali observer in Eldoret said the accord was significant "if the signatories are sincere and carry it out".

"This deal has the potential to move the Somali peace process significantly forward," he said. "If peace can be achieved in Mogadishu, then peace is possible in Somalia."

A Mogadishu businessman, Muhammad Ahmad, said that people in the city had received news of the declaration "but are not celebrating yet".

Security Council welcomes peace talks: The UN Security Council has hailed ongoing regional efforts to reach a lasting settlement to the situation in Somalia.

In a statement read out, Dec 12, by the current president, Ambassador Alfonso Valddivieso of Colombia, the 15-nation body indicated its firm support for the "unified approach of the

Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to national reconciliation in Somalia". However, the council expressed concern over the situation of internally displaced people in Somalia. It called on all armed factions to allow humanitarian personnel "immediate and unfettered" access to these populations at risk.

[Background Info. Somalia, page 883:a]

b. Political party re-launched: A political group-ing has been revived during the ongoing Somalia National Peace and Reconciliation conference in Eldoret, it was reported, Dec 16.

The delegates from the Sade community, also known as the Marehan, declared the relaunch of the Somali Democratic Party (SDP).

"SDP is a non-violent political party which was formed in 1993 in the Gedo region of Somalia, but has remained dormant because of the prevailing political condition of our land," its interim leaders said in a statement.

The leaders include Abdi Barre Abdi (chairman), Dr Omar Ibrahim Mohamoud (vice-chairman), Sultan Ahmed Muse Aden, Sultan Bashir Hassan Mohammed, Nabadoon Mohamed Nur Buule, Hire Sabtow Cusman and Samatar Rashid Abdullahi.

The SDP relaunch, they said, followed a leadership crisis within the community attending the conference, which they claimed had resulted in the exclusion of most members of their community from the peace talks. The political entity would be used to express their interests at various reconciliation conferences like the Eldoret one, they added.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SOUTH AFRICA

a. Right-wing bomb plot uncovered: The South African police are on high alert after uncovering details of a right-wing bombing campaign planned for the festive season, a local newspaper reported, Dec 8.

The targets of white Afrikaner extremists include a military base in the Northern Cape province, as well as railway lines, taxi stands, bridges, airports, beaches and casinos countrywide, the *Sunday Times* reported.

"We have received information that the right-wingers are planning a bombing campaign starting from December 16, said an official. "We have their target list, but are not going to release it. We are on top of everything". No NIA staff would be allowed to take leave over the festive season, he said. The National police commissioner, Jackie Selebi, appealed to the public to remain calm.

[Background Info. South Africa, page 908:a]

b. Oprah donates millions for girls' academy: Knowing Nelson Mandela's reputation for getting charitable donations out of the rich and famous, American talkshow queen Oprah Winfrey coughed up without being asked.

It cost her \$10 million but it meant she kept on the right side of the man she calls her greatest living mentor.

"He's known for being able to extract the last dime from people. So I volunteered first," Oprah said, Dec 5.

With 84-year-old Mandela at her side, the African-American celebrity with a net worth edging towards the \$1 billion mark broke the ground for what will be the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls.

"We are looking for strong, brave girls with heart. I believe girls are going to take over the world. Men have been in control long enough but, don't worry, we're prepared to share power," the petite presenter said at the ceremony on the 22-acre wooded site, 40 km south of Johannesburg.

The academy's doors will open in January 2005 and Oprah's million will be spent over a decade to build it and run it with the provincial education ministry, Caren Yanis, executive director of the Oprah Winfrey Foundation, said.

"I will be overseeing even the smallest details. There will be a fireplace in the library to make this school a home," Oprah, 48, said on the latest stop of a planned four-week trip to South Africa, a country she says she has fallen in love with.

There will be 450 girls aged between 12 and 18 boarding at the academy. All will be "focused learners" with a strong bent for maths and science. Most will be picked from disadvantaged communities.

A victim of abuse when she was a child, Oprah said violence against women and girls was being tolerated in South Africa, the US and elsewhere in the world. "In our academy, it is not acceptable," she said.

Oprah, who dragged herself up from the bottom rung in rural Mississippi, said the facilities would include "a telecommunications system that will allow me to teach them from Chicago".

Mandela embraced her warmly and called her "the queen". The school will be in one of the enclaves not controlled by South Africa's ruling party, the African National Congress.

Local member of parliament, Manketjies Grobler of the mainly white Democratic Party, expressed enthusiasm at the ceremony.

c. Hunt for Kenya bomber: Kenyan police believe that a suspect in the bombing of the Paradise Hotel in Mombasa, for which the Al-Qaeda terror network has claimed responsibility, has moved to South Africa.

Kenyan police deputy commissioner William Langat, in charge of the investigation into the attack, told *The Sunday Times*, Dec 13, from Mombasa that he had sent a request to the South African Police Service headquarters in Pretoria.

He had asked for information that would establish whether Saleh Ali Saleh Nabhan had come to South Africa, as claimed by members of Nabhan's family.

Nabhan was born in Mombasa in 1979 and lived in the city until the time of the attack, Langat said.

Investigators have established that Nabhan, although unemployed, bought the sports utility vehicle that was used to make

the car bomb that destroyed the Mombasa resort on November 28, killing 10 Kenyans and three Israelis.

He was named in interviews with a car dealer who had sold the vehicle used in the attack, Langat said.

The attack on the hotel coincided with a missile attack on an Israeli passenger jet taking off for Israel from Mombasa airport.

The allegation that Nabhan is in South Africa comes after other reports that the country is being used as a refuge for Islamic extremists, in particular the Al-Qaeda network formed by Saudi born Osama Bin Laden.

d. Maduna signs Kilgore's extradition: Justice minister Penuell Maduna has signed the papers authorising the extradition of former Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA) member James Kilgore who is wanted in the United States for murder, a spokesman said, Dec 14.

Justice spokesman Paul Setsetse said Maduna signed the extradition order, Dec 13. It would be handed to Interpol for execution by not later than Dec 17, he added.

"The order will be handed to Interpol during the course of this long weekend. We are hoping that Interpol will facilitate Kilgore's departure as quickly as possible," Setsetse said.

Maduna's signature was all that was needed for Kilgore to be handed over to US authorities.

While Kilgore formally consented to the extradition, South Africa could not by itself decide when he should leave, Setsetse said.

Kilgore was arrested on November 3 in Cape Town, where he was living and working as a respected academic under the alias Charles Pape.

He is wanted by a US federal court on charges related to the possession of a pipe bomb and for a passport offence. He is also wanted by a California state court in connection with a first-degree murder charge and the use of an unlicensed weapon in that murder.

Twenty-seven years ago he was a member of the radical SLA rebel group, an organisation best remembered for its kidnapping of newspaper heiress Patty Hearst.

The murder charge related to the killing of 42-year-old Myrna Opsahl in an SLA bank robbery in Carmichael, north of Sacramento, in 1975.

e. 57 escaped prisoners still at large: Fifty-seven of the 73 inmates who escaped from the Bizana Prison in the Eastern Cape, Dec 13, were still at large, police said.

Superintendent Nondumiso Jafta said that since the recapture of 16 escapees in the vicinity of Bizana, Dec 13, no more re-arrests had been achieved.

Correctional Services personnel, assisted by a police helicopter with a searchlight, and other units are working round the clock to apprehend all of those who escaped, the majority of whom were dressed in civilian clothes.

The inmates -- three of whom were serving sentences while the rest were awaiting trial -- escaped when they were evacuated from the prison after a gas stove exploded in the prison's central courtyard causing a fire.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg, *Hindu*, Madras and *Telegraph*, Calcutta)

SUDAN

a. Khartoum extends deadline: Khartoum has given Uganda two more months to flush out the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) from bases in southern Sudan, it was reported; Dec 3.

Meanwhile, Uganda has reiterated her stand not to offer any support to the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) that has fought the Khartoum government since 1981. Defence minister Amama Mbabazi told journalists, Dec 2, that the protocol extending Operation Iron Fist up to January 31, 2003 was concluded at the weekend in Khartoum.

"The Ugandan side reiterated its commitment not to harbour, sponsor or give military or logistical support to the SPLA/M as stipulated in Articles 1 and 4 of the 1999 Nairobi Agreement," said a joint communique signed by Mbabazi and his Sudanese counterpart, Maj. Gen. Bakri Hassan Salih.

In Khartoum, Bakri also issued the same communique announcing the extension, it was reported.

Sudan and Uganda have in the past traded allegations that each country was allowing rebel groups to operate on their soil. Mbabazi, who had just returned from Khartoum, said Sudanese liaison army officers will now be stationed in Gulu to monitor the observance of the agreement and likewise UPDF liaison officers will be in southern Sudan.

"We are also going to have a joint inter-ministerial committee meeting next month to look at wider areas of co-operation," Mbabazi said.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

SWAZILAND

a. Unions to pressure govt to abide by rule of law: After relative quiet, Swaziland's labour unions are about to embark on the first national stay-away in five years, it was reported, Dec 9.

Union leaders are confident that the time has come to press for democratic reforms in the country, despite a government ban on strikes and threats from the royal establishment that if the stay-away takes place during the annual kingship pageant, strikers would be committing sacrilege.

"This is a process, and success will be measured incrementally as we inch forward from dictatorship to democracy," Jan Sithole, secretary-general of the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU), said.

"Of course, if government accedes to our demands, this will be a one-off strike. But we expect to have to stage mass action each month for two-day periods, indefinitely," he added.

The workers' stay-away scheduled for December 19-20 is co-organised by the SFTU and the Swaziland Federation of Labour (SFL).

Law practitioners on strike in Swaziland: Swaziland's judicial system came to standstill, Dec 3, when law practitioners embarked on a strike to protest alleged interference in the judiciary by Prime Minister Sibusiso Dlamini.

While judges of the High Court were locked in a meeting with Dlamini, lawyers met in the court's chambers where they resolved to embark on the strike in solidarity with the judges of the Court of Appeal who resigned, Nov 29. The six judges, all South African, resigned after Dlamini announced he would ignore rulings that limited the power of King Mswati III, Africa's last "absolute" monarch. The judges, led by Chief Justice Stanley Sapire, emerged from the meeting to announce that no solution was reached. The lawyers, who protested under the banner of the Law Society of Swaziland, vowed to continue their action until the Swazi government stopped its interference in the judicial process.

"We cannot continue with work when it is evident that the judicial system is in a shambles and there is a crisis in this country," said the law society's president Paul Shilubane.

US urges government to abide by democratic principles: The United States has urged the government of Swaziland to abide by democratic principles and warned that its continued eligibility for the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) was subject to constant review.

A statement, released locally by the office of US ambassador to Swaziland James McGee, said: "The United States is deeply concerned that the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary in Swaziland be preserved. Disregard for these issues raises questions about the government's respect for basic internationally recognised tenets of good governance."

"The decision of the government of the Kingdom of Swaziland to disregard the rulings of the Court of Appeals, and the subsequent en masse resignation of the court is disturbing. We are alarmed to see abuses of these basic principles of justice and human rights on the rise in Swaziland."

Up to now, the US embassy had not commented on Prime Minister Sibusiso Dlamini's refusal to enforce two rulings of the Court of Appeal. One ruling nullified a royal decree on the grounds that King Mswati III had no power in law to bypass parliament and issue laws on his own. The second called for the imprisonment of the police commissioner for ignoring a court ruling to permit political detainees to return to their ancestral lands after they were evicted by Mswati.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Swaziland, page 906:a]

TUNISIA

a. Tunisia launches "City of Culture" project: The "City of Culture", the most important cultural infrastructure project since Tunisia's independence in 1956, was launched, Nov 28.

A special event, attended by President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, was held on this occasion on the grounds where the major complex will be built. The "City of Culture," which will overlook the Tunis lakeshore, will span a total area of more than 66,000 square meters. The national museum for civilizations, alone, will be built over a 22,000 square metre area.

Greeted by artists and project managers, President Ben Ali highlighted the important impact this project will have on the country's artistic and cultural life.

Situated downtown Tunis, the "City of Culture" will include a "cultural tower", movie theatres, art galleries, an 1800-seat opera hall, a 700-seat auditorium and a 300-seat theatre.

It will also include a media library, a national arts library and a national museum for civilizations. The total cost of the project will be about 100 million Tunisian dinars (about 73 million US dollars).

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

UGANDA

a. Government drops NRA Bill: The Government, Dec 12, withdrew the National Resistance Army (Amendment) Bill 2002 from Parliament and promised a comprehensive UPDF law in line with the views of most MPs.

The Bill, tabled by defence minister Amama Mbabazi in August, sought among other things to scrap the post of army commander and to establish a new post of Chief of Defence Forces as the overall head of the defence forces.

It also proposed the post of Deputy Chief of Defence Force and a Chief of Staff.

It recommended the splitting of the UPDF into land forces, Airforce and other forces prescribed by the army council.

The Bill was listed on the order paper for debate, Dec 12, but the minister of state for defence, Ruth Nankabirwa, requested the Deputy Speaker, Rebecca Kadaga, to allow her to withdraw it. Nankabirwa said her discourse with the parliamentary committee on defence and internal affairs had revealed that a substantive Uganda Peoples Defence Forces law would be preferred.

She said the House had earlier rejected a Bill on deployment of forces outside Uganda because it was "piecemeal."

b. Rebels kill soldiers in ambush: At least four soldiers were killed in an LRA ambush along Pakwach-Karuma road.

"There was an ambush at Pajok in which we lost three soldiers and an officer," army spokesperson Maj. Shaban Bantariza said.

"It was staged by rebels in the area commanded by Odiambo and James Opoka," he added. The officer was identified as Lt. Moses Asiimwe. Bantariza said the lorry was able to drive through the ambush with the four dead soldiers and five injured who were rushed to hospital.

He said soldiers of the 21st battalion in charge of patrolling the Karuma-Pakwach route responded quickly and saved the

lorry from further attack. He also denied speculation that the ambushed soldiers belonged to the Presidential Protection Unit. "If those soldiers were from the PPU they would have been heavily protected. It was simply a truck from Pakwach to Gulu," he said.

Information in Kampala claimed, Dec 9, that the soldiers were returning from a presidential function. However, it remained unclear how many were killed. Some sources alleged more than four were killed. They said the soldiers on the Chinese-made Jeifang truck died instantly after a rocket-propelled grenade hit it.

c. MPs reject appointment of envoy: The parliamentary appointments committee, Dec 12, rejected the appointment of Joseph Ocwet as an ambassador on grounds that he is not a Ugandan.

A source said Ocwet was rejected because he holds a British passport and has never been to Uganda. "This gentleman can disown Uganda in a case where he is faced to choose between his biological and legal citizenship, especially in a situation where Uganda does not recognise dual citizenship," the source said.

Six other presidential nominees were approved for the appointment as ambassadors. The committee was chaired by Speaker Edward Ssekandi. The new ambassadors approved were Brig. Matayo Kyaligonza, former ministers Deo Rwabita and Kweronda Ruhemba.

Others were Jacob Okello, Dr. Sisye Kiryapawo and Charles Walimbwa, a former Mbale district LC5 chairman.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

ZAMBIA

a. Parliament supports National Broadcasting Amendment Bill: Members of Parliament (MPs), Dec 12, supported the re-introduced Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (Amendment) Bill but expressed reservations about proposals for licensing fees.

Moving a motion to re-introduce the Bill, information and broadcasting minister Newsteadimba said government had brought back the Bill after consulting the opposition and other stakeholders.

The Bill, among other things, seeks to remove the regulatory function of ZNBC, provide for collection of licensing fees and enhance autonomy of the ZNBC board to be ratified by Parliament.

imba said government had brought the Bill bearing in mind the critical role that ZNBC played in providing a link between the people and government.

The minister said ZNBC owed various institutions K21 billion as it was only able to raise K350 million per month when its operational costs amounted to K750 million.

"In the light of the foregoing, the television levy that was rejected in 1987 is long-overdue to broaden ZNBC's financial base," he said.

b. Millers import 50,000 tonnes of maize: The Millers Association of Zambia (MAZ) has said only 50,000 tonnes of maize have so far been imported by the millers who were asked to bring in 300,000 tonnes, it was reported, Dec 16.

MAZ secretary Allan Sakala said in an interview in Lusaka that millers were scared of importing maize because it had become very expensive. Sakala said millers were requested to import 300,000 tonnes of maize but had only imported about 50,000 tonnes because many of them were scared of making losses.

"The problem is that at the time we agreed to bring in the 300,000 tonnes of maize, the exchange rate was at K4,500 to the dollar but today the Kwacha has depreciated to over K5,000 to the dollar.

"Our fear is that this may shoot up to levels which many may not be able to afford and that is why we are appealing to government to subsidise the price," he said. He added that the difficulties in importing the maize were compounded by a serious shortage of foreign exchange.

"We have tried to import the maize which is coming from South Africa and Tanzania but we don't have adequate foreign exchange to do so," said Sakala.

c. Minister dies in road crash: Zambia's interior minister—one of President Levy Mwanawasa's closest aides—was killed in a car crash, Dec 7, police said.

Lackson Mapushi's car veered off the road near the small settlement of Chibombo, 85 km north of the capital Lusaka, before rolling several times and resting on its side, Police Inspector General Francis Musonda told reporters.

Mapushi, 44, died on the spot while his wife Lydia sustained serious injuries and was rushed to a Lusaka hospital.

"The minister died on the spot and we are investigating what exactly happened," Musonda said.

"Mrs Mapushi is in an unstable condition. She sustained two cuts on the scalp and has a suspected broken spine and ribs," Musonda said. Mapushi was travelling to Chibombo from Lusaka for a branch meeting of the ruling Movement for Multiparty Democracy.

Mapushi was appointed to the cabinet in January following Mwanawasa's victory in December presidential polls. He has been one of the key supporters of Mwanawasa's anti-graft campaign.

(SOURCE: *Zambian*, Nairobi)

17.02.03

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ANGOLA

a. President dos Santos to continue talks on elections: Angolan head of State, Jos Eduardo dos Santos, said, Dec 27, in Luanda he would continue consultations with Parliament, Council of the Republic, political parties and representatives of the civil society to seek consensus on holding of general elections in the country.

In a year-end message to the nation, President dos Santos stressed that democracy can not develop without periodical election of the organs of political power.

"We are all, without exception, learning how to live in the diversity, that we recognise that we have a common destination and the more united we are the stronger we will be".

Earlier in his address, dos Santos recalled that electoral processes in Africa have caused some agitation and there might still be in Angola some who may fear a ballot.

Land Act in force from 2003: The new Land Act, under debate in the country, will be adopted in 2003 President dos Santos said in his speech.

"Some voices suggested that this discussion should continue for some more years. To us, the adoption of a new Land Act is urgent and should occur next year", said dos Santos.

The President considered the Act as being one of the fundamental elements of fight against poverty, for it will outline the patterns of land ownership, while being a factor of production of extraordinary importance for the poor rural population.

At the same time, he added, "the Act will allow the restructuring of the agricultural sector and redefine the policies of selective credit, particularly the micro-credit, which is a very efficient way to combat poverty in the country-side".

b. 2003 State Budget passed: The Angolan Parliament, Dec 18, approved the government programme and State Budget for 2003 with the draft law on the latter, winning 95 votes for, zero against and 44 abstentions from UNITA parliamentary group.

UNITA leader Jeronimo Wanga said that they would rather "wait to see" the execution of the "ambitious intentions" of the new government led by Prime Minister Fernando da Piedade Dias dos Santos "Nando".

The 2003 Budget resolution approved by the MPs urges the government to take the necessary economic and financial actions

aimed at avoiding the deepening inequalities and worsening of hardships in majority of provinces.

It also recommends the implementation of an adequate policy of tax and financial incentives to attract private investment and contribute for reduction of inter-provincial and inter-sectoral imbalances. The MPs asked for a report on the organisational, functional, economic and financial situation of the Central Bank (BNA) and its growth prospects to be submitted to the Parliament in the first quarter of 2003.

(SOURCE: *Namibian*, Windhoek)

BENIN

a. First municipal elections: Voters in Benin went to the polls, Dec 15, in the country's first municipal elections since the end of one-party rule in 1990.

Some three million people were eligible to elect their mayors and municipal councillors, previously designated by the government.

The otherwise calm election was marred by disturbances in Cotonou's Douzieme Arrondissement (12th ward), the stronghold of ex-President Nicéphore Soglo, who ran for mayor of Cotonou against former trade minister Severin Adjovi. Adjovi was President Matthieu Kerekou's campaign director at the last presidential election.

Voting was cancelled in some parts of the Douzieme Arrondissement and did not take place in others because voting materials either arrived late or were not supplied, sparking angry reactions from voters. The chairman of the Autonomous National Election Commission (CENA), Soule Agbetou, was stoned by a crowd at one of the polling stations and had to be rescued by police.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BURKINA FASO

a. Help sought to fight Meningitis: Burkina Faso's government has asked the World Health Organisation (WHO) for help in its fight against meningitis.

The request coincides with the start of the 2002-2003 meningitis season, it was reported, Dec 30.

The ministry of health reported that 123 cases of the disease, 16 of them fatal, were reported by the country's 53 health districts from Dec 9 to Dec 15 Dec. None of the districts had reached

"warning stage" (five cases for 100,000 inhabitants) or epidemic stage (10 cases for 100,000 inhabitants), minister of health Alain Yoda said, Dec 27, at a news conference in the capital, Ouagadougou.

"However, there is a regular increase in the number of suspected cases since November 2002," he added.

The minister said analyses of the first cases revealed the "persistence" of a new strain, W135, which killed 1,474 persons out of 12,794 infected between February and May 2002.

"Due to the non-availability of the W135 vaccine, the strategy of an early vaccination campaign has not been carried out in the year 2002," Yoda explained.

"There is a risk of a W135 meningitis epidemic in the year 2003 since people have not been immunized, while there is no sign that the other strains will not occur."

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

BURUNDI

a. WFP begins food distribution to former rebels: The World Food Programme (WFP), through the German NGO GTZ, has begun distributing food aid to former rebels of the Conseil National pour la Defense de la Democratie-Forces pour la Defense de la Democratie (CNDD-FDD).

"Eleven tonnes of rice, beans, flour, sugar, salt and cooking oil have been distributed," said a GTZ official, Dec 30.

The month-long distribution effort, which began, Dec 29, is targeting 14,000 former fighters in Kayange of the Musigati Commune within the Kibira Forest of northwestern Bubanza Province, the CNDD-FDD's stronghold.

The EC decided recently to supply the CNDD-FDD members, "whose living conditions have deteriorated since the ceasefire agreement", with food aid worth 500,000 euros (US \$521,400). It said in a communique that it had taken the "special measure" so that "the weapons of thousands of hungry men should not lead to violence and thereby endanger the peace process".

b. Burundi cancels NRA debt: In an unprecedented show of co-operation, Burundi has cancelled a debt of US\$165,000 (sh300m) incurred by the then rebel National Resistance Army (NRA).

Uganda is also negotiating with Iraq and Libya to cancel similar debts amounting to millions of US dollars.

State minister for finance Mwesigwa Rukutana told Parliament, Dec 19, that the money was for blankets and medical supplies to NRA. The Burundi government gets aid under the Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative," he said.

HIPC is a donor-driven initiative under which countries which implement IMF-backed economic policies have a portion of their multilateral debts cancelled.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

a. EC donates US \$415,040 towards mediation efforts: The EC has donated 400,000 euros (US \$415,040) to the African Union (AU) to support mediation efforts between the government of the Central African Republic (CAR) and rebel forces in the country.

In a statement issued, Dec 23, the EC said the money would be used by the AU special envoy to CAR for setting up of an AU liaison office in the capital, Bangui, for six months. In addition, the AU representative would be allowed to finance mediation activities such as meetings between the parties from the budget, the EC added.

Supporters of the former army chief of staff, Gen Francois Bozize, launched an abortive coup on October 25, against President Ange-Felix Patasse.

Following the uprising the putschists gained control of the northern part of Bangui for several days, before being forced to retreat. They remain in control of parts of the north and south of the country.

Despite the efforts of the UN Peace-building Support Office in CAR, BONUCA, the EC said the political situation was one that could be described as an "armed peace".

The situation remained "critical" and the possibility of a further "regionalisation" of the conflict was increasing, it added.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Central African Republic, page 914:a]

CONGO

a. Angolan troops begin pull-out: Angola's remaining 1,500 troops backing President Denis Sassou-Nguesso in the Republic of Congo (ROC) began to pull out, Dec 16, thereby ending a five-year presence in the country.

"Our mission has been accomplished," Lt-Gen Fernando Joao da Rosa, commander of the Angolan military contingent, said. Its original mission, which started in June 1997, was to support the forces loyal to Sassou-Nguesso against those of the then President, Pascal Lissouba, and his Prime Minister, Bernard Kolelas.

In October 1997, Sassou-Nguesso's forces, assisted by those of the Angolan contingent, seized control of the capital, Brazzaville, and the strategic port of Pointe-Noire. Lissouba was ousted from the presidential palace, while Kolelas fled to Burkina Faso.

Sassou-Nguesso was then installed as President, having forcibly retaken the office he had lost in the 1992 presidential election. An accord on military aid between Brazzaville and Luanda was signed in November, thereby formalising the Angolan military presence in the ROC.

Angola justified its presence in the ROC by asserting that Lissouba was supporting UNITA rebel forces against the Luanda government, as well as anti-government forces in the oil-rich Angolan enclave of Cabinda.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Congo, page 915:a]

CONGO (DR)

a. DRC parties sign peace deal: An end to the four-year conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo appeared to be in sight, Dec 17, as all parties signed a pact providing for an all-inclusive transitional government and elections in about two-and-a-half years.

The deal, signed in Pretoria in the early hours of the morning, contains formula for dividing key positions among all parties -- including the current government, rebel groups, militia, the political opposition and civil society.

It provides for President Joseph Kabila to remain the interim head of state, assisted by four Vice-Presidents, said South Africa's ambassador to the DRC, Sisa Ngombane.

The interim government should remain in place for about 30 months -- after which democratic elections are to be held. "When talking about time-frames for the elections to be held, proposals ranged from 24 months to 36 months," Ngombane said.

"The general consensus was that elections should be held as soon as possible -- ideally not more than 30 months after the swearing in of the transitional government.

"It was agreed this period should be extended only under extraordinary circumstances." One of the Vice-Presidents would come from the current governing party, one each from the two main rebel groups -- the Congolese Liberation Movement (MLC) and the Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD), while the fourth is to be appointed by the political opposition.

Mbeki hails agreement: South African President Thabo Mbeki congratulated the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dec 18, for signing an agreement to end years of conflict in that country.

He said South Africa's involvement stemmed from its desire for peace and prosperity in the DRC and not from an interest in the central African country's wealth in minerals.

"What the people of South Africa want is that the Congo, the DRC, should be a peaceful country. What the people of South Africa want is that the DRC should be a democratic country. What the people of South Africa want is that the Congo should be a prosperous country," Mbeki told a packed Stellenbosch university auditorium.

"As Africans we are very proud of what you have done, and as Africans, we say that the decision you've taken to help to restore the dignity of the African people, well done.

"The African National Congress and our people want to say congratulations for your agreement. We want to wish you success in the implementation of that agreement.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Congo (DR), page 915:a]

EGYPT

a. Technical co-operation accord with Zimbabwe: Zimbabwe and Egypt, Dec 19, signed a technical co-operation agreement, which will see Zimbabwe benefiting from Egypt's health personnel, a cabinet minister said, Dec 20.

Speaking after signing the agreement, the minister of health and child welfare, Dr David Parirenyatwa, said his ministry was facing a critical shortage of personnel in the health sector.

Egypt's representative Ibrahim Haggag said the new agreement was going to help improve the health conditions in Zimbabwe.

He said there were many common aspects between the two countries that helped to deepen relations.

"We both suffered colonisation and we both now are facing another challenge of achieving the economic development in order to achieve prosperity and welfare for our people," he said.

(SOURCE: *Monitor*, Kampala)

ETHIOPIA

a. More than 11 million face severe food shortages: More than 11 million Ethiopians are facing severe food shortages following a prolonged dry spell leading to poor harvests in many parts of the country, according to a joint report released, Dec 30, by the UN Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) and the World Food programme (WFP).

A WFP press release quoted the report as saying that the 2002 cereal and pulse production of 9.2 million tonnes to be 25 per cent below the 2001 harvest. "Late, poorly distributed and early cessation of the 2002 seasonal rains were the main cause of the decline of grain production," it said.

Depressed grain prices in 2001 also contributed to the poor harvest. Moreover, crop yields fell because farmers were reluctant to invest in improved seeds and fertiliser due to the uncertain crop prospects, it said.

As a result, Ethiopia will need to import 2.3 million tonnes of cereal for 2002. With 328,000 tonnes of commercial imports forecast, a deficit of 1.8 million tonnes remains.

"This deficit will have to be covered by a combination of emergency food aid and bilateral donations," the report said."

(SOURCE: *Addis Tribune*, Addis Ababa)

[Background Info. Ethiopia, page 915:a]

GHANA

a. Landslide victory for Mills in NDC polls: Prof John Evans Atta Mills won the Presidential candidacy of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) at the special delegates congress by a landslide, it was reported, Dec 23.

Prof Atta Mills polled 1,116 votes against 194 votes for the former finance minister, Dr. Kwesi Botchwey. This is the first time after three general elections for the NDC, to elect a presidential candidate through an open democratic process. Previously, the party chose its candidates by what the leadership called popular acclamation.

The atmosphere of the congress was highly charged with the supporters of the two candidates engaging each other in scuffles and slanging bouts. The noise was so deafening that the master of ceremonies for the occasion, E T Mensah, had a hard time trying to calm down the tension in the hall. The scene outside was no different giving the overall impression that two different political parties had clashed at the same venue. Some supporters of the two candidates chanted war songs and even threw punches at each other.

Dr. Obed Asomoah, chairman of the party, was booed when he acknowledged the tension in the party and said: "Since I sought the chairmanship of the NDC I have been the subject of such vile propaganda that beats the imagination of many".

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

IVORY COAST

a. Rebels seize town: Rebels seized another town on Ivory Coast's volatile western front, moving closer to elite French soldiers sent in to stop them, rebel and military officials said, Dec 21.

The advance came as Ivory Coast's top opposition leader joined the rebels in calling for the resignation of the President, Laurent Gbagbo.

Alassane Quattara, speaking in Senegal where he sought safety after the violence broke out, said he would open contacts with the insurgents.

The rebels won their latest victory in Bangolo, about 50 km south of the city of Man, which they captured earlier.

"My men are in Bangolo. Bangolo is under my control", said the rebel leader, Felix Doh, by satellite telephone, Dec 21.

French forces battle rebels: Ivory Coast's rebels took on French and government troops alike, Dec 21, in a full-scale drive to sweep past French defences and on to the nation's prized commercial capital.

The battle around the western city of Duekoue saw what appeared French forces' heaviest engagement yet in the three-month-old rebellion splitting their former colony, the world's largest cocoa producer and one of West Africa's leading nations.

French troops' entry deeper into the fighting—confronting rebels with mortars and mounted cannon, Dec 21—made the French look ever more like the potential make-or-break difference for the embattled government.

Rebels' direct confrontation with the French comes after days of gains in insurgents' push south and east toward Ivory Coast's skyscraper-lined capital, Abidjan.

Taking Abidjan would give the rebels control of Ivory Coast, a county of high-rises, highways, and international businesses that is one of Africa's most vital economic hubs and ports.

The French, taking up their largest military role in their former colonial empire for years, have called the stakes too high to let Ivory Coast fall into chaos.

As rebels seized the city of Man, Dec 19, and pushed farther south, Dec 20, French forces dug in at the western city of Duekoue, 350 km northwest of Abidjan.

On Dec 21, rebels moved to bypass the French.

In hours of fighting with Ivory Coast government forces, rebels took the town of Blodi, just outside Duekoue, on a secondary road that would let them skirt the French position and push on to Abidjan.

Annan appoints humanitarian envoy to Ivory Coast: A senior United Nations relief official, Dec 27, was designated Secretary-General Kofi Annan's humanitarian envoy for the crisis in Ivory Coast.

The appointment of Carolyn McAskie, currently the UN's deputy emergency relief coordinator, comes in the light of the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the country and its negative impact on the sub-region, according to a UN spokesman.

"This designation should be seen in the context of recent high-level missions to the region, including the mission of Kamal Morjane, assistant high commissioner for refugees, and the fact-finding human rights mission led by Bertrand Ramcharan, deputy high commissioner for human rights," the spokesman said in a statement.

Ms. McAskie's mission will further enhance the profile of the humanitarian effort in Ivory Coast and ensure that the work of the UN team is part of a more coherent UN approach to the crisis, the spokesman added.

(SOURCE: *Hindu*, New Delhi, *Statesman*, Calcutta and *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Ivory Coast, page 917:b]

KENYA

a. Kibaki takes oath as President: Mwai Kibaki took the oath of office as Kenya's third President from a wheelchair, Dec 30, as hundreds of thousands of his supporters roared their approval in a downtown park.

With his right leg in a cast after a December 3 car accident, Kibaki, a 71-year-old economist, pledged to conduct his duties without fear or favour or malice,

"So, help me God", he said in Kiswahili, the common language of Kenya. He then received a 21-gun salute. The huge crowd had waited patiently for hours under a hot sun for Kibaki and outgoing President Daniel arap Moi to arrive for the historic transfer, which ended the Kenya African National Union Party's four-decade hold on power.

Kibaki and his opposition alliance were swept into office three days earlier in general elections won for the first time by the political opposition.

Although the electoral commission had not released final results by Dec 30 morning, provisional results gave Kibaki 63 per cent of the vote to 30 per cent for his principal rival, 41-year-old Uhuru Kenyatta, the son of Kenya's first President, Jomo Kenyatta. With 122 seats, Kibaki's National Rainbow coalition was guaranteed an absolute majority in the 210-seat elected Parliament.

Another 12 seats are filled by parties according to their percentage of the votes.

"We are here to celebrate freedom. We have been tormented for many years. We are here to celebrate a new government", said Eric Akoth, an 18-year-old student waving a placard that proclaimed "Youth have faith in Kibaki" in Kiswahili.

Moi, the 78-year-old former primary school teacher, held sway over Kenya for 24 years as an autocratic leader.

Kibaki served him as Vice-President for a decade until 1988. After the inauguration, Moi was to host a lunch for Kibaki and guests at State House, the modest presidential headquarters that once served as the seat of the British colonial government.

Moi was constitutionally obliged to step down after his second five-year term under a multiparty system restored in 1991, and he kept his word.

Kibaki vows to purge Kenya of corruption: Mwai Kibaki has vowed to purge the country of the rampant and crippling corruption that has characterized Daniel arap Moi's 24 years in power.

It has taken Kibaki 11 years and defeats in two elections to become Kenya's third President, and that may be the easy part.

Now he has to undo Moi's legacy: Government corruption and inefficiency on such a scale that Kenya's economy has been plunged into prolonged torpor and its people into an ever-expanding morass of poverty.

Kibaki said the fight against corruption would be his government's first priority.

He pledged to set up an anti-graft unit to investigate and prosecute those who have looted billions of pounds from Kenya's treasury.

More than £150 million is believed to have been stolen in the days before Moi's government fell in the election. "We shall start work straightaway and very soon you'll see the result," Kibaki said as he accepted victory.

"First and foremost, my task will be to tackle corruption and we shall start as leaders by showing our wealth, and as soon as Parliament reconvenes we shall bring and pass the law which shall establish the anti-corruption authority," he said.

In a criticism of Moi, famous for meddling in his subordinates' responsibilities, Kibaki said his style in government would be to let ministers get on with their work.

"We do not want a President whose job is to bully others. The President will leave the ministers to do their job", said Kibaki, who served as Vice-President for a decade under Moi before he fell out of favour and later quit the ruling party.

"We shall reduce the size of government; it must be smaller, slimmer and very efficient," he said. "We need to remove the excess baggage from the government".

End for Moi era: Nine senior KANU cabinet ministers, including the vice president and the finance minister, were rejected by voters, according to preliminary results.

"We are cruising to a fantastic and historic victory", leading opposition politician Kijana Wamalwa said as early returns appeared in line with most analysts' predictions.

With almost a quarter of the electorate counted by 1520 GMT, unofficial results gave the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) candidate Mwai Kibaki 65 per cent of the key presidential vote.

NARC had won 71 seats against 26 of KANU in the race for the largely powerless Assembly, according to unofficial results compiled by the Institute for Education in Democracy (IED) and private Nation Television. Parliament has 210 elected members and 12 nominated by the parties.

Three minor presidential contenders were given little chance.

The Electoral Commission begun issuing preliminary tallies, Dec 28, similar to those by independent poll trackers.

"The mood here is very somber," said an official at State House, Kenya's seat of power.

NARC leaders sensing victory were already in a jubilant mood. Some excited supporters staged noisy joyrides down Nairobi's main business thoroughfare in dangerously overloaded pickups.

Opposition stalwart Raila Odinga toned down his persistent warnings against possible poll foul play by KANU, but advised Moi and his party at a news conference: "I think the most honourable thing to do now is accept defeat and hand over gracefully".

The Commonwealth congratulated Kenya for holding what it called responsible and orderly elections and showing faith in

democratic values. It appealed to all parties to accept the results and act with statesmanship. KANU has wielded absolute power for most of the time since Kenya, a leading tea and coffee grower and major tourist destination, won independence from Britain in 1963.

Moi, Dec 28, shrugged off the prospect of poll humiliation for his anointed successor, telling reporters at an army farewell parade: "Well, that is the way democracy goes. I had said whoever wins, I will hand over powers". Moi, 78, is bound by the Constitution to step down.

In another blow to KANU, election officials said Vice President Musalia Mudavadi lost his seat, as did KANU's top politician in the Indian Ocean region, Shariff Nassir.

Voting went mostly peacefully but two people were killed in western Kisii district, Dec 27, when a policeman accompanying a car carrying ballot papers to the main counting centre opened fire on another car, mistakenly fearing an ambush.

Downpours hit voting by disrupting transport in a handful of constituencies where voting was taking place.

The National mood appeared mostly calm and upbeat despite widespread complaints from individuals who were barred from casting ballots after finding themselves left off voter lists.

[Background Info. Kenya, page 880:a]

b. Pakistani in court over drug trafficking: A Pakistani was, Dec 24, arraigned before a Kibera court charged with trafficking 1,77kg of heroin valued at over Sh 1.7 million.

The accused Mian Aqeel Ashrif, a businessman suspected by the police to be a member of an international drug syndicate denied the charge before chief magistrate, Wanjiru Karanja.

Prosecution led by chief inspector, William Kemboi, denied the accused bail, saying he is likely to abscond.

In a sworn affidavit, inspector Emmuel Mwasi attached to anti-narcotic unit at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) said that the accused was arrested on December 20, 2002. at the airport while on transit to Entebbe in Uganda.

He told the court that the accused person is a foreigner who has no fixed abode nor family ties in Kenya. The court heard evidence of constable Wilfred Otieno also attached to anti-narcotic unit. He told the court that on Dec 20 he intercepted the accused who was on transit to Entebbe.

(SOURCE: *Asian Age*, New Delhi, *Hindu*, Madras and *Telegraph*, Calcutta)

LIBERIA

a. 'Charles Taylor's son on the rampage again: Charles Taylor's notorious son is on the rampage again.

According to the news reports, after he ordered the beating and subsequent killing of his driver, Isaac Gono, less than three months ago, he is now said to be involved in another killing. On

Dec 16, 2002, one Fitzgerald Vimplet (assistant traffic director) became the latest victim of Chuckie.

Vimplet was a member of the Liberia national police and part of the "advance team" which made sure that the Monrovia-Robertsfield Highway was safe for President Taylor's trip to Togo.

According to the reports, Chuckie shot him in the head. But Chuckie claims that his rear view mirror hit Vimplet and killed him on impact. Chuckie is said to have asked the guy who was riding with Vimplet not to explain how he was killed. Because of threats the fellow is now claiming that he was at sleep when the incident took place.

Words around indicate that the Taylor government suspected Vimplet to have been a supporter of Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. The government has refused to turn the body over to the family because if the family members take over the body, they will see Vimplet's head.

During a meeting that Taylor had with the various political parties, he made reference to the death of the police officer by saying that it was a mirror accident that people are trying to blame it on his son.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

MALAWI

a. New malaria drug: Malawi has launched a new drug for Malaria called Arinate, manufactured by Belgian company Dafra Pharma, it was reported; Dec 24.

Herwig Jasern, head of Research and Development at Dafra Pharma, said the company decided to introduce a new drug after observing that the Malaria parasite was becoming more resistant to traditional anti-Malaria drugs. He said Arinate was discovered in China in 1970, but only came into use in 1985.

"Although it was used massively by the local population, the parasites of Malaria never became resistant to this new drugs," Jasern said, adding "after 15 years of Arinate use, the incidence of Malaria has dropped sharply in China and Vietnam."

Jasern, however, said that the broad use of the drug was not likely to eradicate the disease completely in many parts of Africa.

"But in some places, eradication can be considered as becoming feasible," he said. He said the new drug had exceptionally high cure rates, rapid clearance of parasites, improved compliance, rapid reduction of fever and definite economic benefits.

Dumisan Chisala, commercial director at Chemicals and Marketing Company (local distributors of the new drug) also spoke highly of Arinate. "When administered in the right dose, it will clear the parasites within 24 hours and clinical relief is achieved within 36 hours," Chisala said.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

MOZAMBIQUE

a. 'Cardoso assassin hiding on Ibo island': Anibal dos Santos, junior ("Anibalzinho"), the fugitive accused of assassinating journalist Carlos Cardoso is in hiding on the island of Ibo, off the coast of the northern Mozambican province of Cabo Delgado, *Savana* newspaper reported, Dec 27.

The story is in sharp contrast to the general belief among those linked to the case that Anibalzinho is somewhere in South Africa. The official police story is that Anibalzinho escaped from the Maputo top security prison on September 1. But since somebody simply unlocked the three padlocks on his cell door, allowing him to walk out of the prison, it has always looked more like an illicit release than an escape.

Police source claimed Anibalzinho was released to avoid any embarrassing revelations he might have made during the Carlos Cardoso murder trial. This included not only naming the people who ordered the murder of Cardoso, but also lifting the lid on other crimes involving high-ranking police officers. "The problem is that Anibalzinho is linked to some of my colleagues in the interior ministry", said one source.

[Background Info. Mozambique, page 918:a]

b. Zimbabwe, Mozambique sign agreement: Zimbabwe and Mozambique, Dec 20, signed an agreement setting up a joint water commission which will initiate water projects on shared watercourses.

The minister of rural resources and water development, Cde Joyce Mu-juru, said the agreement would result in Mozambique and Zimbabwe managing, sharing and developing water resources in the same manner as that of the trans-boundary watercourse of the Pungwe River.

"The issue of establishing the Joint Water Commission between the two countries started in 1993 when the whole of Southern Africa was experiencing a severe drought and the government embarked on the Pungwe-Mutare pipeline as an emergency measure.

"Mozambique and Zimbabwe came together on that project and now 10 years down the line we have signed an agreement which establishes the Joint Water Commission," she said. She urged national directors of water to make use of the institution to address the country's water management and development programmes for the mutual benefit of Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

NIGERIA

a. Former deputy governor arrested for minister's murder: A former deputy governor of southwest Nigeria's Osun State has been arrested for the murder in 2001 of the country's then minister of justice, police said, Dec 30.

The inspector general of police, Tafa Balogun, told a news conference that Iyiola Omisore, who was removed from office on December 13, would face trial for the murder of Bola Ige. "Having been removed from the immunity that surrounds his office, we had to effect his arrest," Balogun said.

Ige had been shot dead at his home in the southwestern city of Ibadan on December 23, 2001, just after he arrived for his Christmas vacation. Police said it was a case of political assassination. Suspicion fell on his opponents in a bitter political feud in his home state of Osun, including Omisore. Several people were arrested and charged, including a close relative of the former deputy governor.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

RWANDA

a. UN urges Rwanda to cooperate with war crimes tribunal: The UN Security Council has told the Rwandan government that it is obliged "to cooperate fully" with the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, based in Arusha, Tanzania.

A statement released by the Security Council, Dec 18, said Rwanda had an obligation to comply with requests made by the UN court for the arrest or detention of persons and their surrender or transfer to the tribunal. The government was also obliged to make witnesses available and assist in ongoing investigations, the statement said.

In a letter to the president of the Council released on August 2 at UN headquarters in New York, ICTR president Judge Navanethem Pillay said that ICTR prosecutor Carla Del Ponte had complained of a lack of cooperation from Rwandan authorities. She said the lack of availability of witnesses from Rwanda was likely to hamper the court's judicial work and hinder the prosecutor's investigations.

In particular, the letter accused the Rwandan authorities of failing to issue travel documents for witnesses in a timely manner to enable them to appear at ongoing trials. Tribunal judges had expressed concern, because three cases had already been postponed several times due to the unavailability of witnesses from Rwanda, Pillay said.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Rwanda, page 920:a]

SIERRA LEONE

a. UNAMSIL completes first phase of withdrawal: The United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) has completed the first phase of its troop withdrawal from Sierra Leone, an official confirmed, Dec 24.

According to the official, just 600 members of the military force had returned home in a withdrawal process that started in October.

"The next phase will be effected in January," the source said, adding that the pullout was a gradual process "which follows a schedule".

In September, the UN Security Council resolved that the 17,000-member force be reduced by 600 soldiers by the end of December 2001, and by 4,500 by May 31, 2003. It is expected that by December 2004 only 2,000 peacekeepers would remain in Sierra Leone.

UNAMSIL forces were deployed in Sierra Leone in November 1999 with a mandate from the UN Security Council to cooperate with the government in the implementation of a disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration plan, ensure the security and freedom of movement of UN personnel and the delivery of humanitarian aid, and protect civilians under threat of violence.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Sierra Leone, page 920:a]

SOMALIA

a. Peace talks adjourned: The Somali peace talks currently under way in the western Kenyan town of Eldoret have been adjourned until after the Kenyan elections, it was reported, Dec 24.

The talks being held since October 15 under the auspices of the regional Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) "will break for the Christmas holidays and the Kenyan elections (scheduled for December 27)". Peter Nyaga, of the press liaison centre of the Kenyan foreign ministry said, Dec 24.

"The talks will resume in earnest by Monday [December 30]", he said. Nyaga added that most of the Somali delegates were still in Eldoret, but that most of the facilitators, "including the IGAD technical committee, are out of town".

Also leaving Eldoret were the surplus delegates, whose transport costs back to Somalia were being met by IGAD, Somali sources said. "People have been leaving all this week. In fact, there is a plane leaving this morning [December 24] for Somalia," said one source. Recently the Somalis agreed to reduce the number of delegates from over 700 to 300.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Somalia, page 920:a]

SOUTH AFRICA

a. Ivory booty in Kruger National Park: In a dark storeroom in the Kruger National Park lies the booty of a jumbo environmental war: South Africa's ivory collection, says a report, Dec 27.

"This is an asset," said Kruger's public relations manager William Mabasa as he pointed to the almost 5,000 pieces—nearly 37 tonnes—of the "white gold" stacked along wooden shelves.

Many conservationists would view the room as a ghastly chamber of horrors.

In November 2002, animal rights groups had howled in protest when the 12th conference of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (Cites) in Chile gave South Africa tentative permission to auction 30 tonnes of ivory.

Neighbouring Botswana and Namibia were also given the conditional go-ahead to auction 20 and 10 tonnes respectively from their stockpiles.

The auctions cannot be held before May 2004 to give Cites a chance to monitor poaching and population trends.

Cites will not allow the sales if the monitoring networks detect an upsurge in the poaching of elephants—which is precisely what many conservationists and some elephant range states like Kenya believe is already happening.

They fear that poachers, anticipating fresh demand for a commodity that has been banned from the global market since 1989—with the exception of "experimental sales" by Zimbabwe, Namibia and Botswana in 1999—will try to build up supplies now in a bid to launder dirty ivory with the clean supplies. South Africa says it needs to unlock the value of its stockpile for badly needed conservation projects.

"The current South African government has many priorities—crime, health care, poverty—and so conservation really has to pay its way," Mavuso Msimang, CEO of South Africa National Parks, said. "We need to sell this ivory for conservation".

South Africa's ivory room is a sight to behold.

Its 4,844 pieces of ivory—some tusks are broken up—have each been recorded meticulously and given a Cites number.

Access is extremely limited and the building's description and precise location cannot be disclosed for security reasons. Only two senior park officials are allowed to open the door—and only if they are both present as they each have different keys.

The biggest tusk, at about 7 feet 6 inches in length and 60 kg in weight, must have belonged to a truly massive animal.

Much of the ivory has been collected in the bush from the carcasses of animals that died from natural causes.

Some of the tusks sat in the bush for a long time and have a weathered look, their surface browned and roughened to the point that it looks almost like tree bark.

The ivory was reaped from controversial culls once used to control Kruger's elephants. No cull has been conducted since 1994 and there are concerns that the population is now too big for the habitat available—even in a park the size of Israel.

b. Mandela's Christmas bash: Thousands of children queued for hours for a special Christmas party with former South African President Nelson Mandela and US talks show queen Oprah Winfrey at his rural home in the Eastern Cape.

Around 15,000 children and parents lined up outside Mandela's home, Dec 22, for the annual Christmas bash—three times as many as in 2001.

Many had queued since 2.00 am.

Children walked for miles, most of them from remote corners of the impoverished Eastern Cape.

But the long wait exhausted the children and by day light several said they were tired and hungry.

One child collapsed after waiting for many hours while another mother was frantically searching for her daughter after getting separated.

At one point, the crush became so great security guards had to cut through a fence to relieve the pressure.

Two children were slightly hurt when part of the fence fell on them but police said they were not in any danger. Thulani Mkombe, 9, and his four year-old sister Fofu, had slept in the back of their mother's car since 2.30 am on a road outside Mandela's house waiting to meet the former president. "I have to say Merry Christmas Mandela," said Fofu.

For many it will be the first chance to meet the loved ex-president, whom they fondly call by his clan name "Madiba", and American star Oprah.

"I'm a South African and have never been up close with Madiba. This is exciting," said Daniel Njapha, who drove for several hours from Durban with his two toddlers.

Mandela has hosted the Christmas party at his home village since 1990 when he was released after 27 years in apartheid jails.

That first occasion attracted only 500 people but it has been growing ever since.

The event was brought forward to December 22, to allow Oprah to attend during her tour of South Africa where she is handing out gifts to needy children.

"We never expected such a large crowd. We thought maybe 10,000 but there's many more," Mandela's spokeswoman Zola Grange said.

(SOURCE: *Telegraph*, Calcutta and *Statesman*, Calcutta)

SUDAN

a. Nuba ceasefire extended: The Sudanese government and southern rebels have extended for the second time a ceasefire agreement in the Nuba Mountains region until mid-2003, it was reported, Dec 24.

"This is indeed a great moment for all the people of the Nuba Mountains... The Nuba people have for years been in the front line of the war and without adequate humanitarian support," Jan Erik Wilhelmsen, chairman of the international Joint Military Commission, the body charged with overseeing the ceasefire, was quoted as saying.

The government and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army-Nuba (SPLM/A-Nuba) originally signed the renewable six-month ceasefire in the 80,000 sq km Nuba Mountains

region of Southern Kordofan State, on Jan 19, 2002, following a proposal made by US peace envoy John Danforth.

Formal peace negotiations between the SPLM/A and the Sudanese government designed to bring an end to the country's 19-year civil war are scheduled to resume in Kenya in early January. A broad framework for a peace deal - the Machakos Protocol - was agreed in July, but agreement has yet to be reached on key issues such as the sharing of power and wealth in a post-conflict Sudan.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

[Background Info. Sudan, page 922:a]

SWAZILAND

a. Pretoria not to dictate to Swaziland: The South African government was not a policeman nor would it dictate to neighbouring Swaziland, foreign minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma said, Dec 19.

Speaking to reporters at the ANC's 51st national conference, she said: "Our attitude to neighbouring countries is that we talk to them, but the decision is theirs in the end.

"We also don't want to act as policemen, we are a country, we have to take things into perspective. We will not dictate, but as I said earlier we will talk."

Earlier, speaking in her capacity as chairperson of the ANC's commission on international relations, Dlamini-Zuma said the party's contact with Swazi authorities would continue.

The ANC was of the view that in the long term Swaziland will benefit from a democratic dispensation but it was up to the Swazi's themselves to sort this out.

A nationwide anti-government strike began in Swaziland in protest against the government which is accused of failing to respect the rule of law and undermining the judiciary.

Swaziland is ruled by King Mswati III, Africa's last absolute monarch. The country was faced with a judicial crisis after the government announced that it would ignore an Appeal Court ruling stating that Mswati had no constitutional power to override his parliament or rule by decree.

Kanyehamba on mission to solve Swazi judicial crisis: Justice George Kanyehamba has been named on a team to Swaziland to solve a crisis between government and the judiciary. Dec 19

The team includes the president of the International Commission of Jurists Prof. Hansungule of Zambia. Kanyehamba is a justice of the Supreme Court.

Six South African judges who made up Swaziland's Court of Appeal resigned early December en masse after Prime Minister Sibusiso Dlamini said the government would not recognise two court judgements that challenged King Mswati III's right to rule by decree.

(SOURCE: *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg)

[Background Info. Swaziland, page 922:a]

UGANDA

a. Museveni witnesses signing of peace accord: President Yoweri Museveni has commended the Uganda National Rescue Front II (UNRF II) rebels for voluntarily heeding the Amnesty law that enabled them to give up fighting and restore peace to the West Nile region.

Museveni who witnessed the signing ceremony of the peace agreement between government and UNRF II at Boma grounds in Yumbe, Dec 24, expressed his gratitude to the leadership of UNRF II for choosing the constitutional path to bring peace.

The agreement was reached after weeklong peace negotiations between the Movement and UNRF II at Arua State Lodge. Deputy Prime Minister and minister of internal affairs Eriya Kategaya signed on behalf of government, while Maj. Gen. Bamuze signed on behalf of UNRF II.

Accompanied by his wife, Museveni said that without embracing peace no development could take place. He said that the Movement government would respect the peace agreement, adding that some of the former rebels will be integrated into the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF).

President Museveni said that the insecurity in Acholi sub-region caused by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) bandits will soon come to an end. He said that government would protect the businessmen from Yumbe whose properties were destroyed by the LRA.

b. 25 prisoners escape from Hoima prison: Up to twenty-five inmates escaped from Hoima prison, Dec 22, as they were having a dance.

The inmates dug a hole in one of walls before they took off one after the other. The prisoners were being entertained inside a wall enclosure. They are said to have taken advantage of the loud music to make the hole in the wall. Only 15 of those who were being entertained are reported to have remained.

"I cannot tell you details now. As you can see, we are very very busy. I wish you come back later," said the officer in charge, Jonah Wandera. He was seen running up and down the prison offices. It is said that the authorities learnt of the escape several minutes later when an 'obedient' inmate alerted prison warders of the development.

"Afande, they have run away," he is quoted to have shouted at the top of his voice.

(SOURCE: *East African*, Nairobi)

ZAMBIA

a. Civil aviation regulations MoU signed: Government has signed the second memorandum of understanding (MoU) on harmonisation of civil aviation regulations in the Southern African Development Community (SADC), it was reported, Dec 19.

Communications and transport minister Lupando Mwape said with the signature in place, South Africa and Zambia become the first countries in SADC among which the MoU would be in force.

Other SADC member states are expected to sign the MoU in the next few weeks. The minister said this at the opening of the forum on harmonisation of civil aviation regulations in Southern Africa held at the Zambezi Sun Hotel in Livingstone, Dec 18.

Mwape said December 17, 2002 marked 99 years from the time the Wright brothers took off in the first powered heavier-than-air aircraft at Kithy Hawk in the US and as such, it was refreshing to note that the forum was being opened on such a memorable day.

He said that the aviation sector in the past few years has moved rapidly in the implementation of new effective and efficient satellite-based technologies that would eventually replace ground-based systems that had served the aviation industry for a long time.

The minister said the ground based systems were becoming increasingly costly to maintain and replace. Hence, the satellite based systems of communications, navigation, surveillance were the solutions.

b. 4,000 litres of illicit fuel seized: A task force led by the Energy Regulation Board (ERB), Dec 19, seized some 4,000 litres of fuel from illegal dealers and arrested 12 suspects in Ndola in a campaign to stop an illicit trade costing the government more than K240 billion every year.

The task force, which comprised officers from Zambia Police Service, Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), Drug Enforcement Commission (DEC) and the Office of President (OP) picked up 12 suspects in the raid on selected spots notorious for the illegal trade.

In Lubuto, there was drama at one of the homes when a boy wept uncontrollably as his father was taken away by the police.

The 10-year-old boy got a metal bar and threatened to strike one of the officers before he was overpowered.

The places searched were on Mufulira Road, Twapia and a farm on the Ndola-Kabwe road where the biggest contraband of more than 3,000 litres was seized.

(SOURCE: *Zambia Times*, Lusaka)

ZIMBABWE

a. Dialogue with C'wealth breaks down: Dialogue between Zimbabwe and the Commonwealth has broken down, it was reported, Dec 20.

Harare is said to be refusing to even return telephone calls or diplomatic notes from Don McKinnon, the secretary-general of the 54-nation club of mainly former British colonies, diplomatic sources told the *Financial Gazette*.

McKinnon was tasked by the Commonwealth to initiate dialogue with Zimbabwe, which was booted out of the councils of the organisation over its March presidential poll, which the Commonwealth said President Robert Mugabe won through violence and fraud.

The group discusses Zimbabwe again at its heads of state and government meeting in Nigeria in three months time. "Since South Africa and Nigeria blocked tougher action against Mugabe, he has become more defiant against the Commonwealth and will not even respond to McKinnon's efforts at restarting positive dialogue. There is no progress whatsoever on that issue," a Harare-based diplomat said.

Foreign affairs minister Stan Mudenge could not be reached for comment on the matter, Dec 19.

However, Mudenge recently announced that the government had finished compiling a comprehensive response to the Commonwealth presidential election observer group's report, upon whose recommendations Zimbabwe was suspended from the club.

b. First Lady grabs prime farm land: Grace Mugabe, wife of Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe, has finally chosen the farm she wants, and ordered the owners and workers off land.

Grace Mugabe has chosen Iron Mask Estate, about 20 miles north-west of Harare, in the Mazowe Valley. The owners, John and Eva Mathews, both in their seventies, have moved off the farm, which was their home for 25 years.

Residents on the farm said Grace Mugabe visited the property and politely told those present there that she was taking up residence and they should find alternative accommodation.

In other parts of Zimbabwe, there is a climate of fear and chaos, as police hunt down white farmers. In recent days, Robert Mugabe's supporters have moved on to several farms, where the owners were in jail, and begun looting equipment and personal possessions. Police said they had no reports of looting.

Groups of farmers appearing in rural magistrates' courts were given differing bail conditions, even after the attorney general's office in Harare issued an instruction that all farmers should be freed on condition that they did not ever return to their homesteads.

Several magistrates ignored the instructions, particularly in the vast ranching lands of Matabeleland in southern Zimbabwe.

Thirteen farmers, several of them pensioners, were granted bail in rural Nymandhlovu, about 40 miles north of Bulawayo, recently. But they then gathered at the local club to hear whether they could go home until their remand late in January 2003.

Before their court hearing, the barefoot farmers, several exercising in a small enclosure outside their cells, were cracking jokes.

David Olds, whose elder brother and mother were murdered in the past two years by Robert Mugabe's militia, stripped off his shirt and turned his face to the early morning sun to warm up after a cold night.

Police in Nymandhlovu refused to let the press or wives of the 13 men attend the hearing in the local magistrates' court within the security fence at the police camp. Wives of several farmers said police were anxious in case hostile people, gathered across the road, stormed the proceedings.

A lawyer representing farmers at another rural magistrates' court said his eight clients were granted bail and allowed to return home for a month to wind up their ranches.

This, the lawyer said would allow them time to challenge the constitutionality of their evictions.

However in Bindura, about 45 miles north of Harare, lawyers said their clients' bail conditions amounted to a conviction as they were given less than 24 hours to return home for the last time and pack up and go.

Wayne Bvudzijena, a police spokesman, said 193 people had been apprehended since the latest purge of white farmers began, but he could not say how many remained in prison.

One of those apparently detained was Elaine Graham, daughter of the British peer, Lord Forrester, who was allowed to breast-feed her month-old baby in the cells. Her husband, Ian, was also arrested. The Forrester family had large agricultural estates in Zimbabwe.

The country-wide swoop on Whites has irreparably damaged Zimbabwe's commercial agriculture at a time when half the population is on the brink of starvation.

Several hundred farmers, particularly in the provinces where Robert Mugabe's ruling Zanu-PF party is strong, have fled their homes and businesses, most of them forever.

While an unknown number of white farmers have been forced to squat with friends and family, the couple allegedly evicted by Grace Mugabe, have been housed temporarily in an apartment in Harare, before they leave to join their daughter in Cape Town.

The Mathews' eviction notice expired 10 days ago. A source said that Mathews, 78, and his wife, 74, were told to appeal against their eviction to the district administrator.

They discovered, however, that he had been part of Grace Mugabe's entourage when she gave orders that workers and other residents on the property should pack their bags.

The farm, which is almost 2,500 acres, has been idle for 18 months since Robert Mugabe's militia arrived and prevented the Mathews from growing any crops.

Grace Mugabe is notorious for her profligate ways and a few years ago had a house built for her which was nicknamed Graceland.

[Background Info, Zimbabwe, page 850:a]

c. Mining concerns stumble into crisis: Two of the country's largest mining concerns - Rio Tinto Zimbabwe Limited and Bindura Nickel Corporation Limited - have stumbled into a serious crisis owing to tougher foreign currency controls introduced recently.

Rio Tinto and Bindura Nickel have already issued separate cautionary statements to their shareholders indicating the seriousness of the new measures on their future survival, it was reported, Dec 20.

Discussions with a view to normalising the situation at the two mining houses are currently underway between management, the Chamber of Mines, the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe and other key ministries.

"Unless the situation is urgently resolved by the relevant authorities, the group will not be able to continue trading due to its inability to meet its expenses.

"Management, through the Chamber of Mines, are in active discussions with the relevant authorities on this matter and the board remains hopeful that a satisfactory conclusion will be achieved," the directors of Bindura Nickel said in a statement.

Pursuant to the announcement of the 2003 national budget, the RBZ came up with additional measures to ensure that the country has sufficient foreign currency to meet essential imports.

(SOURCE: *Daily Telegraph*, London and *Independent*, Harare)

REGIONAL

a. Racket in AIDS drugs for Africa: Medicines provided cheaply to treat AIDS patients in Africa are being smuggled back into Britain and sold for profit on the black market, *The Telegraph*, London, said Dec 29.

The police believe that African officials are making tens of millions of pounds a year selling drugs shipped to them at cost price that fetch a huge premium in mainland Europe.

British investigators have smashed one smuggling ring in Senegal, West Africa, where a government-appointed official sold £12 million worth of AIDS drugs to pharmacists in Europe.

Another smuggling ring in South Africa is being investigated by Interpol, the international police service.

The discovery is an embarrassment to ministers who have placed enormous pressure on pharmaceutical companies to provide AIDS drugs to Africa at no profit. The pressure

culminated in November 2002, with Tony Blair pushing through a two-tier pricing system to ensure the supply of cheap medicines to poorer countries.

As a result, hundreds of millions of pounds worth of AIDS drugs are being sold at cost price to Africa, where in some nations as many as one in three adults is infected with HIV. The drugs are supplied on the understanding that they will not be sold for profit in developed nations.

Investigators working for GlaxoSmithKline (GSK), the British pharmaceuticals giant, discovered in October 2002, that millions of pounds worth of one drug, Combivir, sent exclusively for African patients, had been reimported into Europe via France and Belgium.

About 34,410 packs of Combivir were discovered in European ports, along with 8,058 packs of Eпивir and 1,100 packs of Trizivir. The drugs check HIV's assault on the immune system.

A box of 60 Combivir tablets sells for £42.58 in Britain. Under an agreement with GSK, the drug is sold in Africa at its cost price of £32.70 a box, allowing smugglers to sell at a discount in Europe but still make profits of hundreds of pounds on each pack.

The racketeers stood to make more than £100 on each pack of Eпивir and almost £500 on each pack of Trizivir.

Detectives found that drugs returned from Senegal had been sold on by Africa Aids Africa (AAA), a Senegalese agency set up by Abdoulaye Wade, the President, and funded by Western governments. Latife Gueye, the head of AAA, appointed by Wade, admitted selling the drugs to European businessmen.

He, however, said he was doing so only because he needed to buy vital equipment. Gueye has since been sacked and is being investigated by police.

"I do not believe that I have done anything morally wrong," he said. President Wade told journalists on Senegalese television that Gueye had committed extremely serious errors. "This has been a disaster for Senegal's AIDS programme," he said.

A spokesman for GSK said that further investigations involving Interpol has been launched in other African countries.

Detectives are also investigating the discovery of more than £10 million worth of AIDS-related drugs believed to have been smuggled out of South Africa, some of which turned up in London.

(SOURCE: *Daily Telegraph*, London and *Telegraph*, Calcutta)